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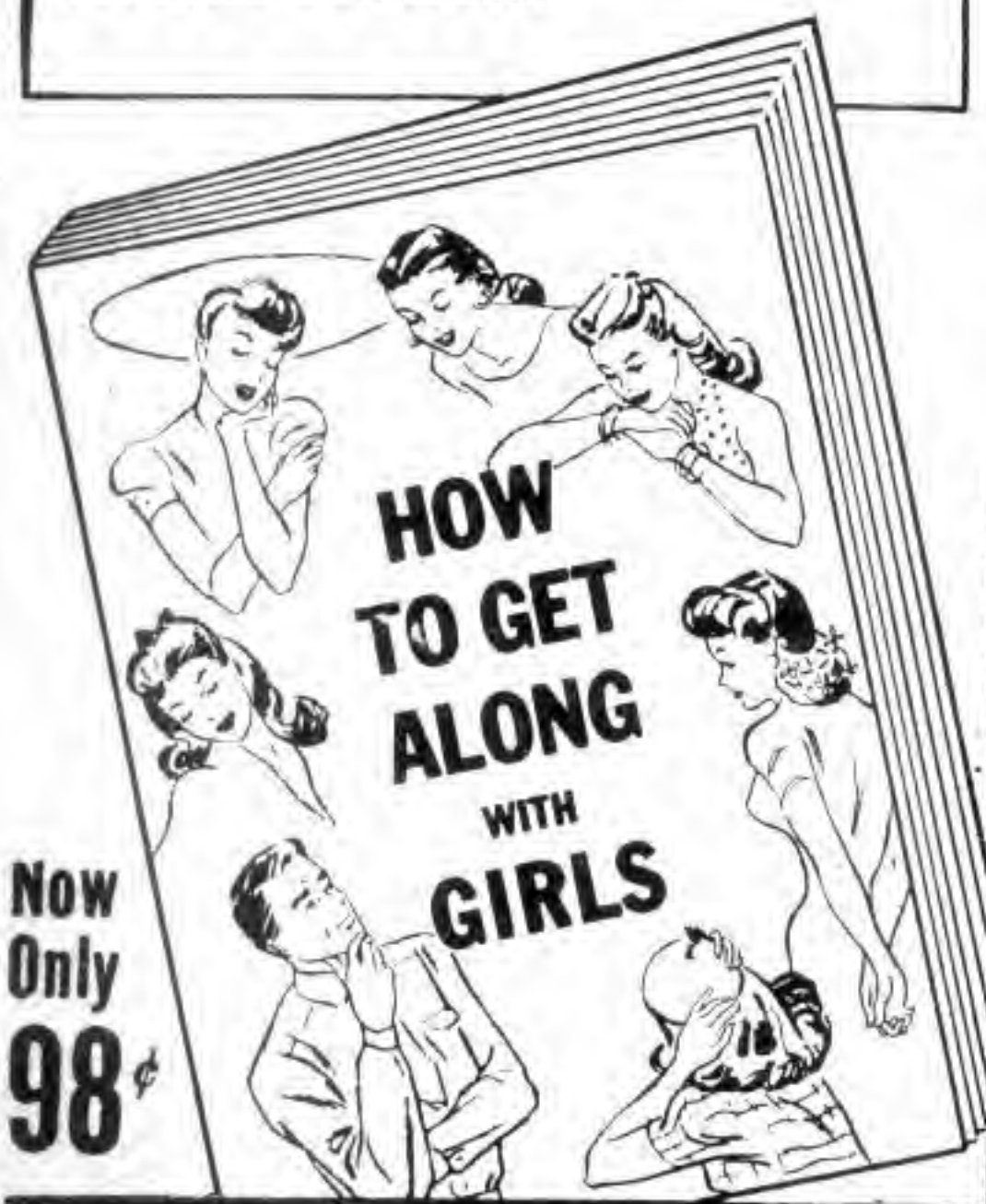
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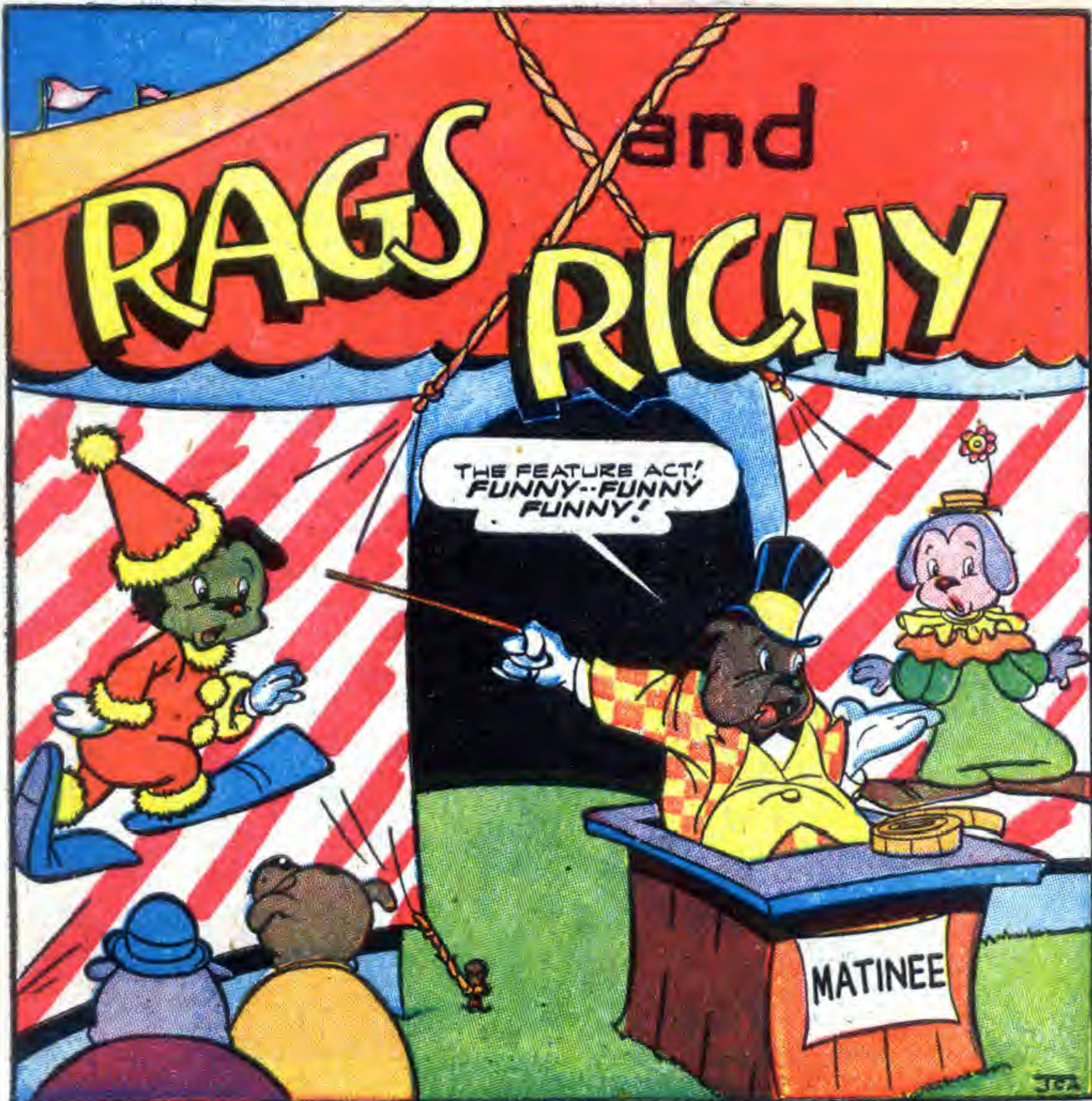
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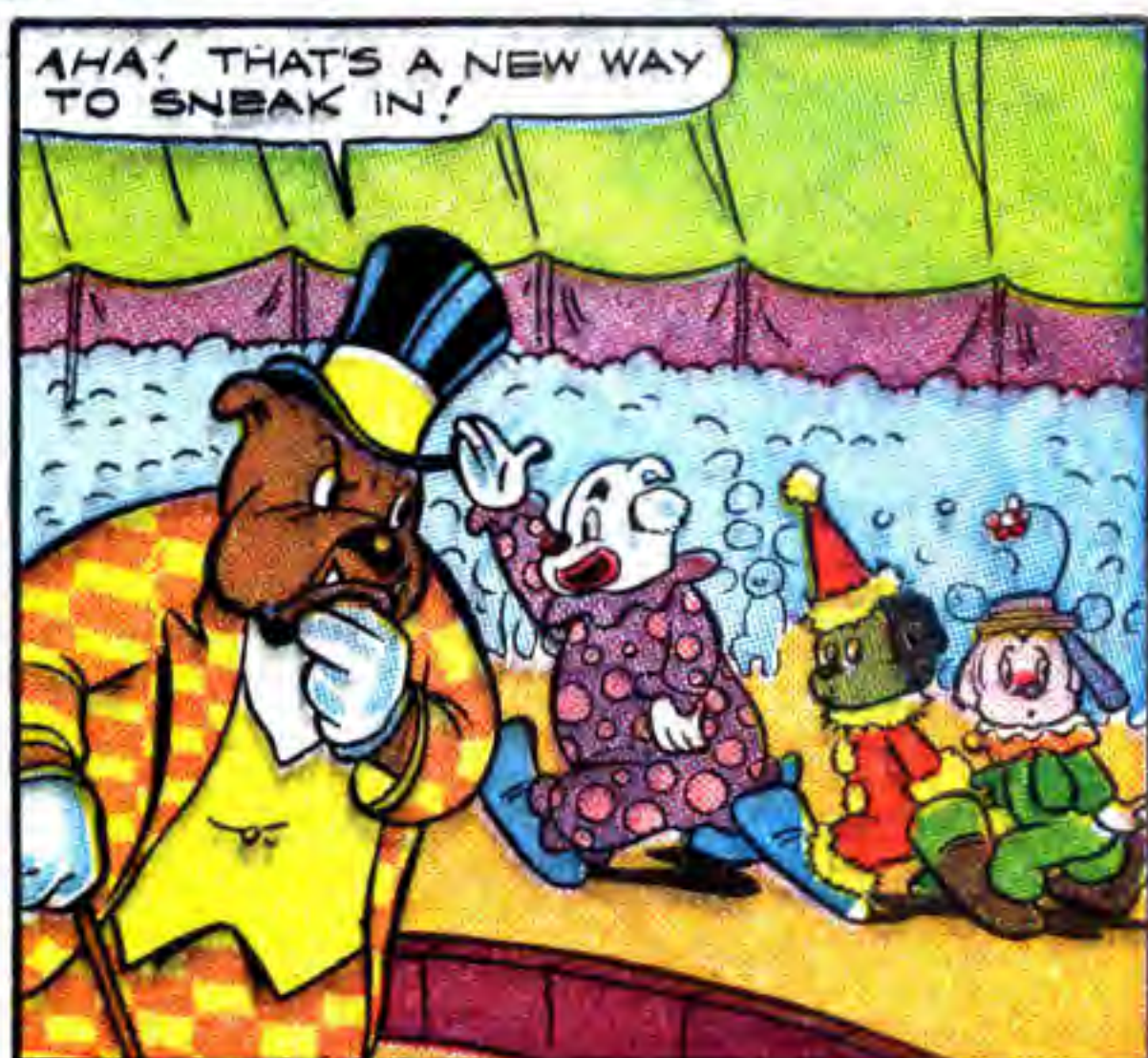
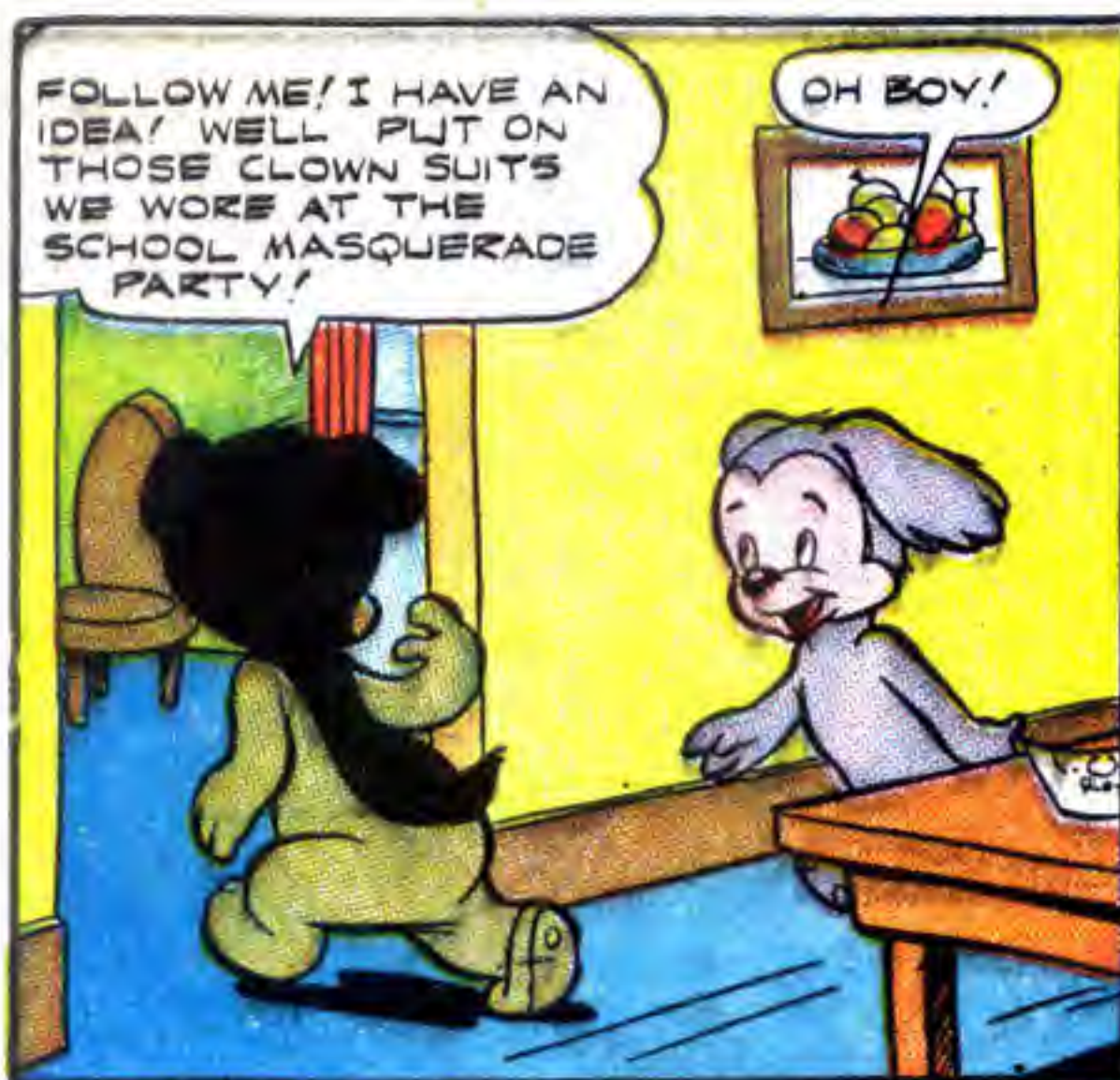
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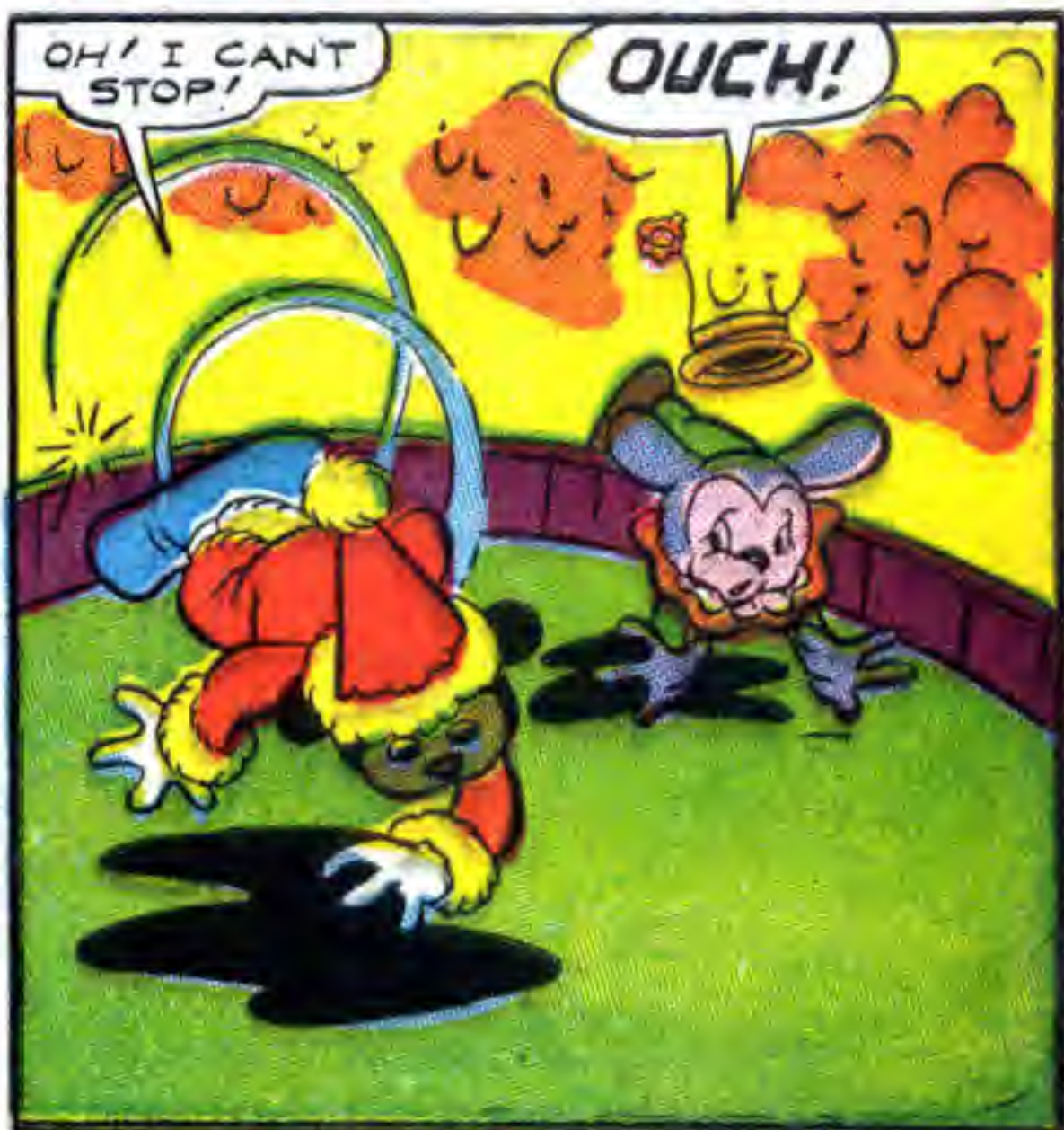




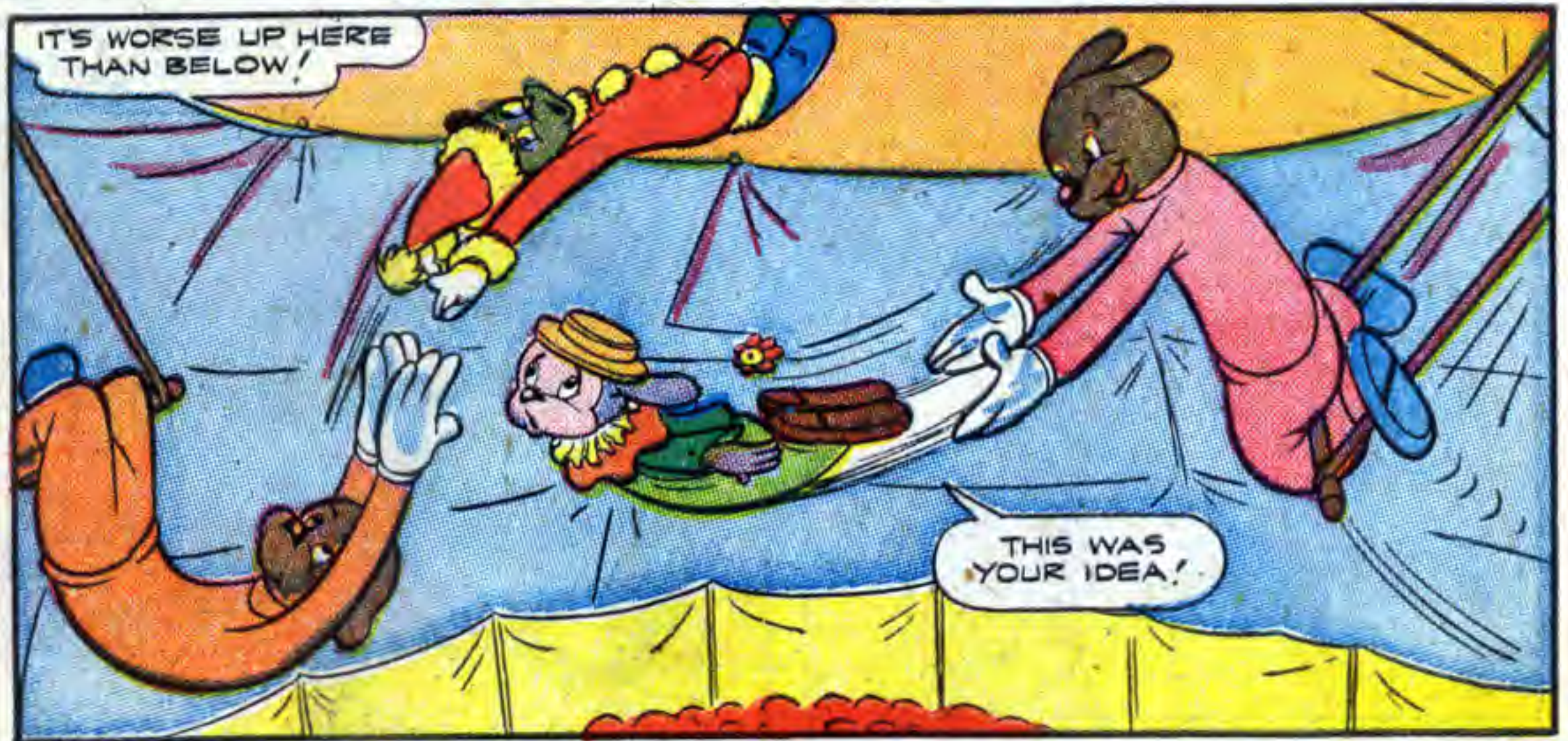
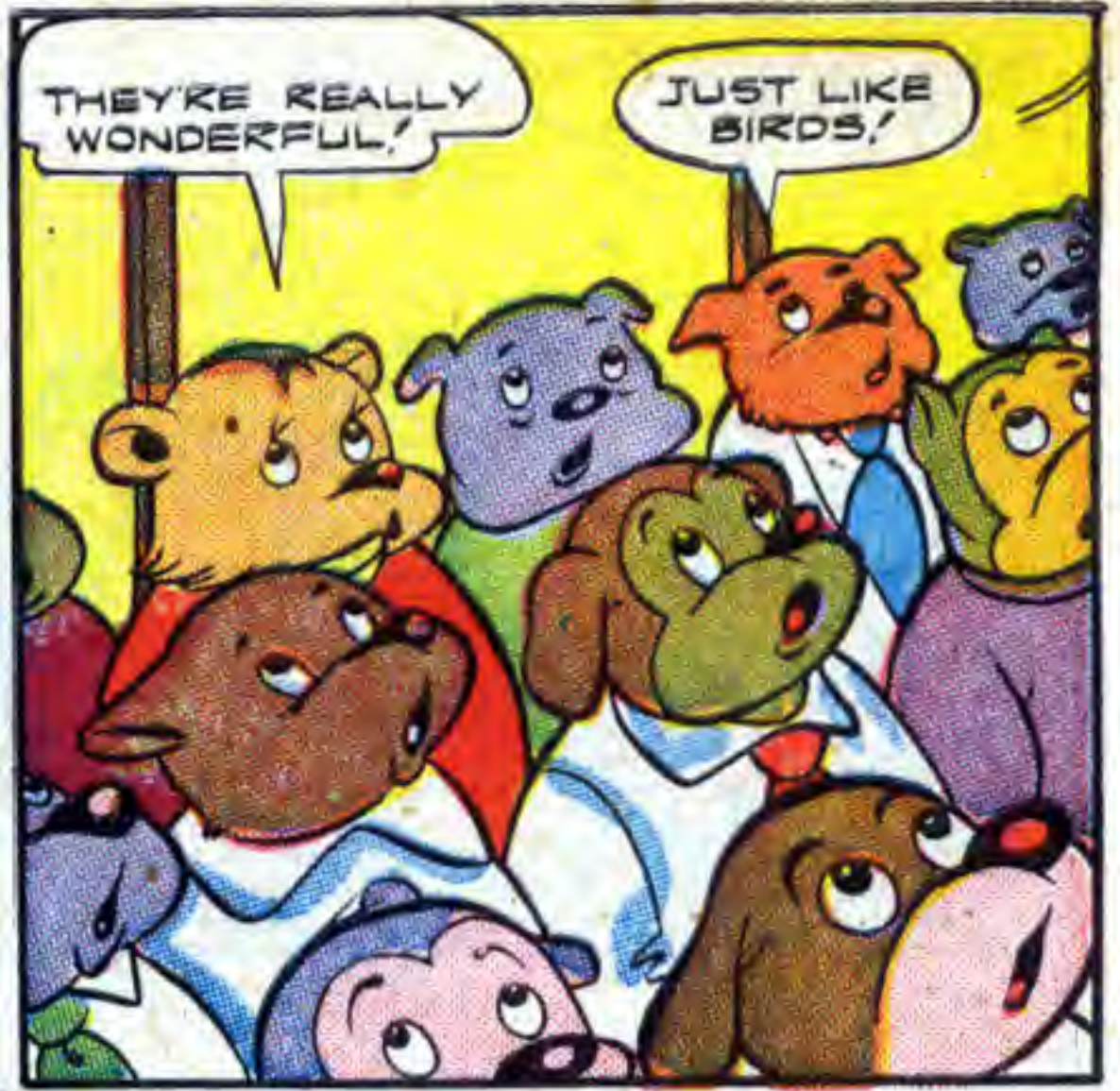


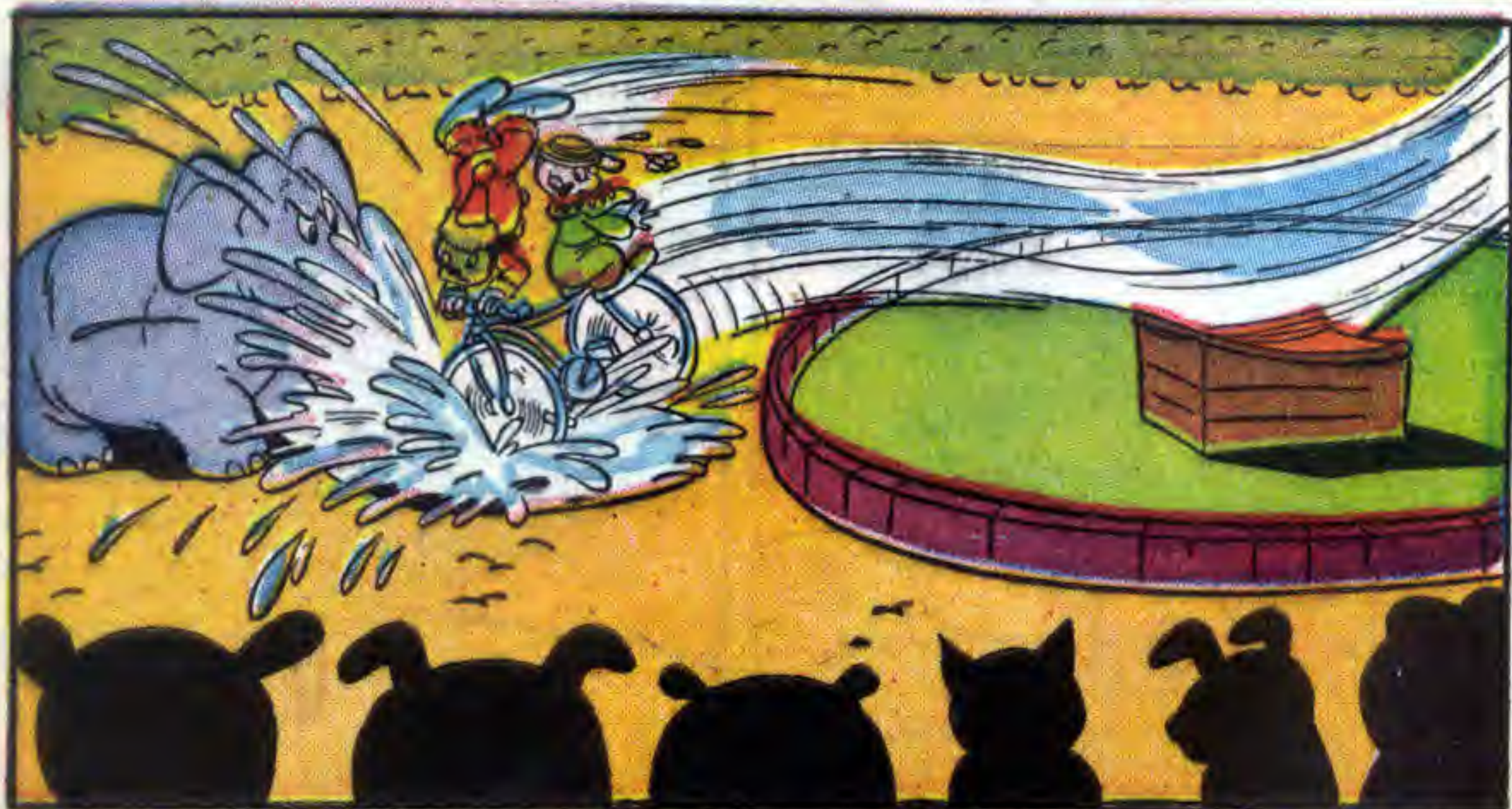
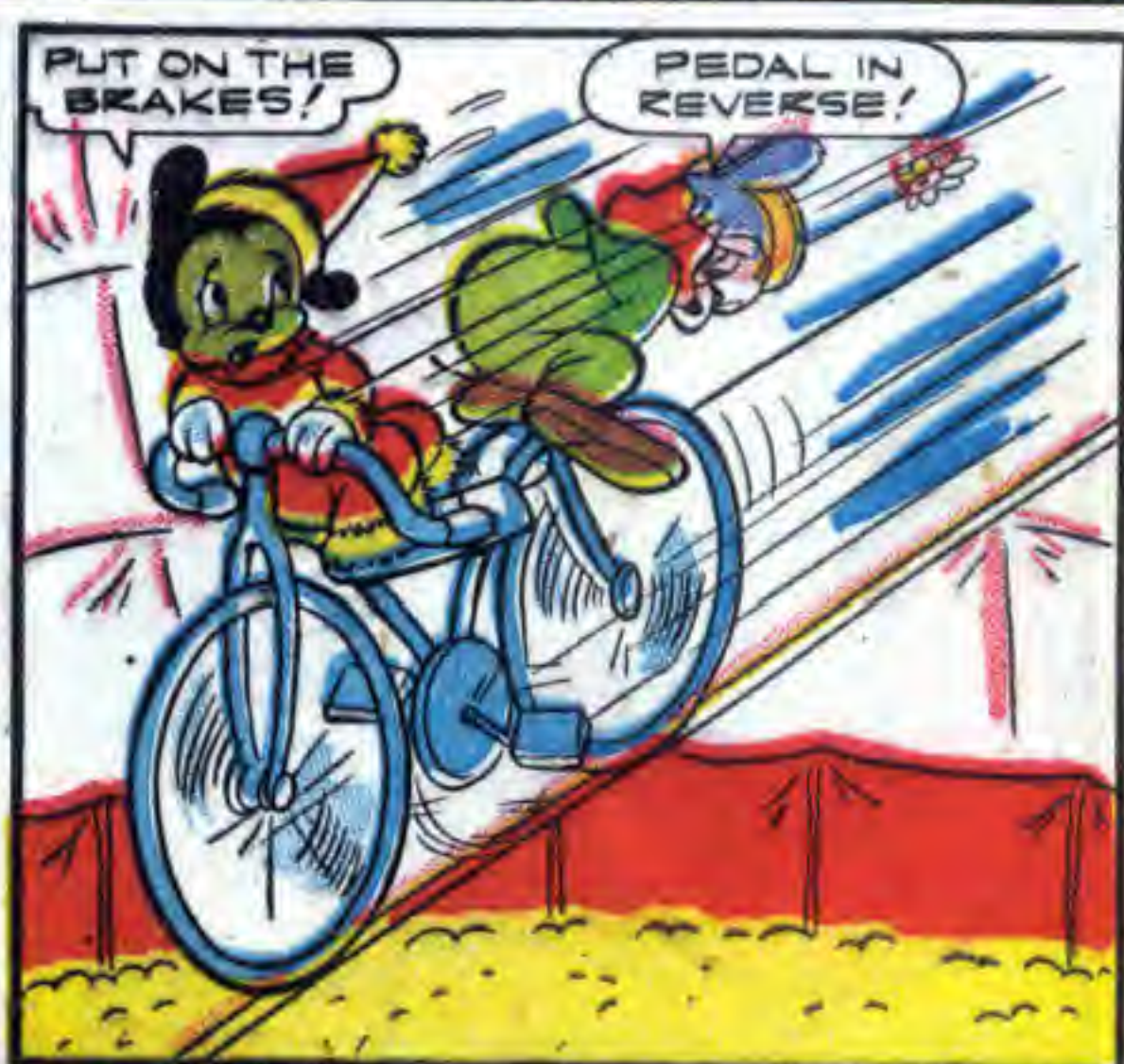
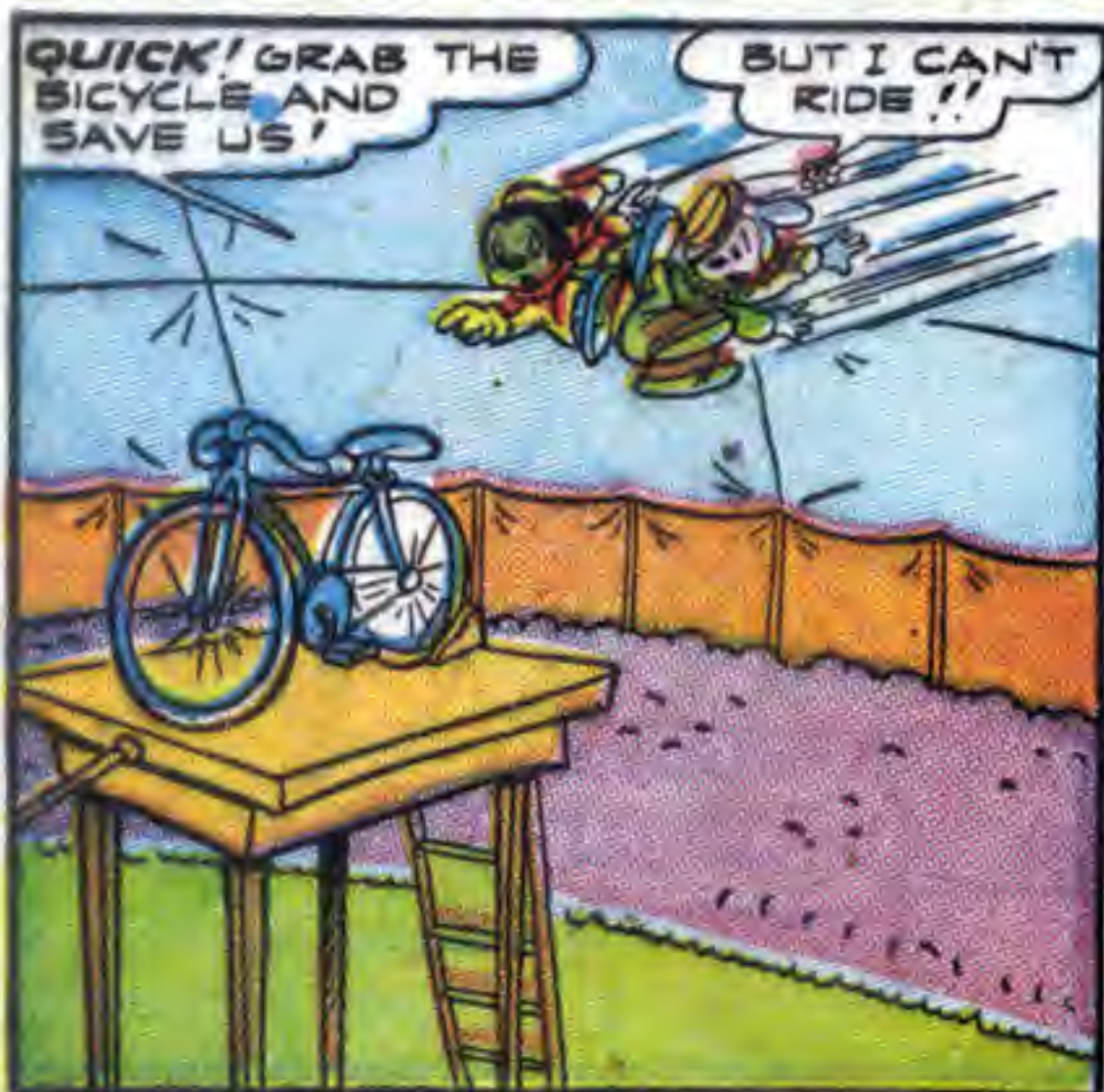
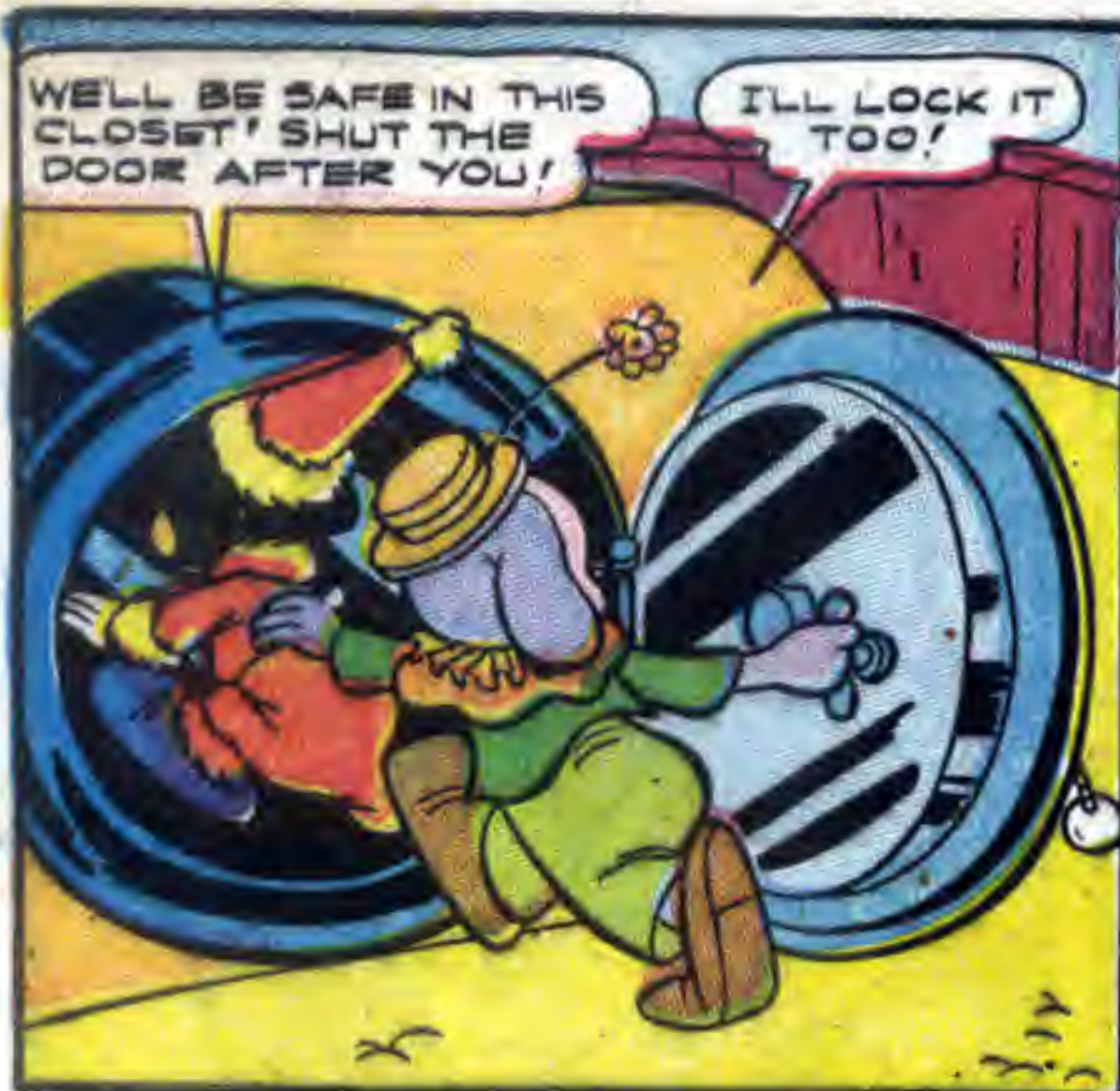
COUGH! COUGH!

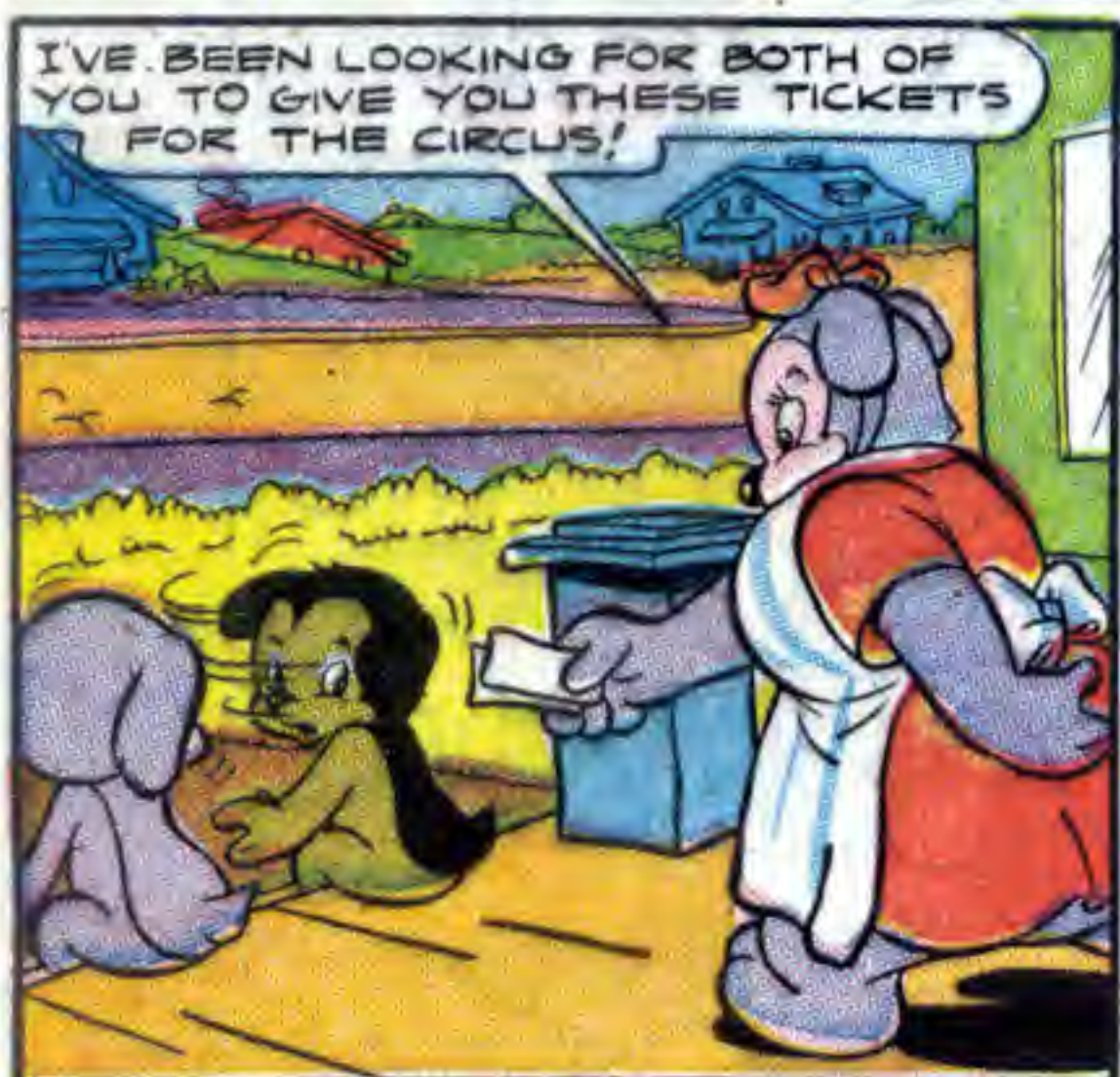
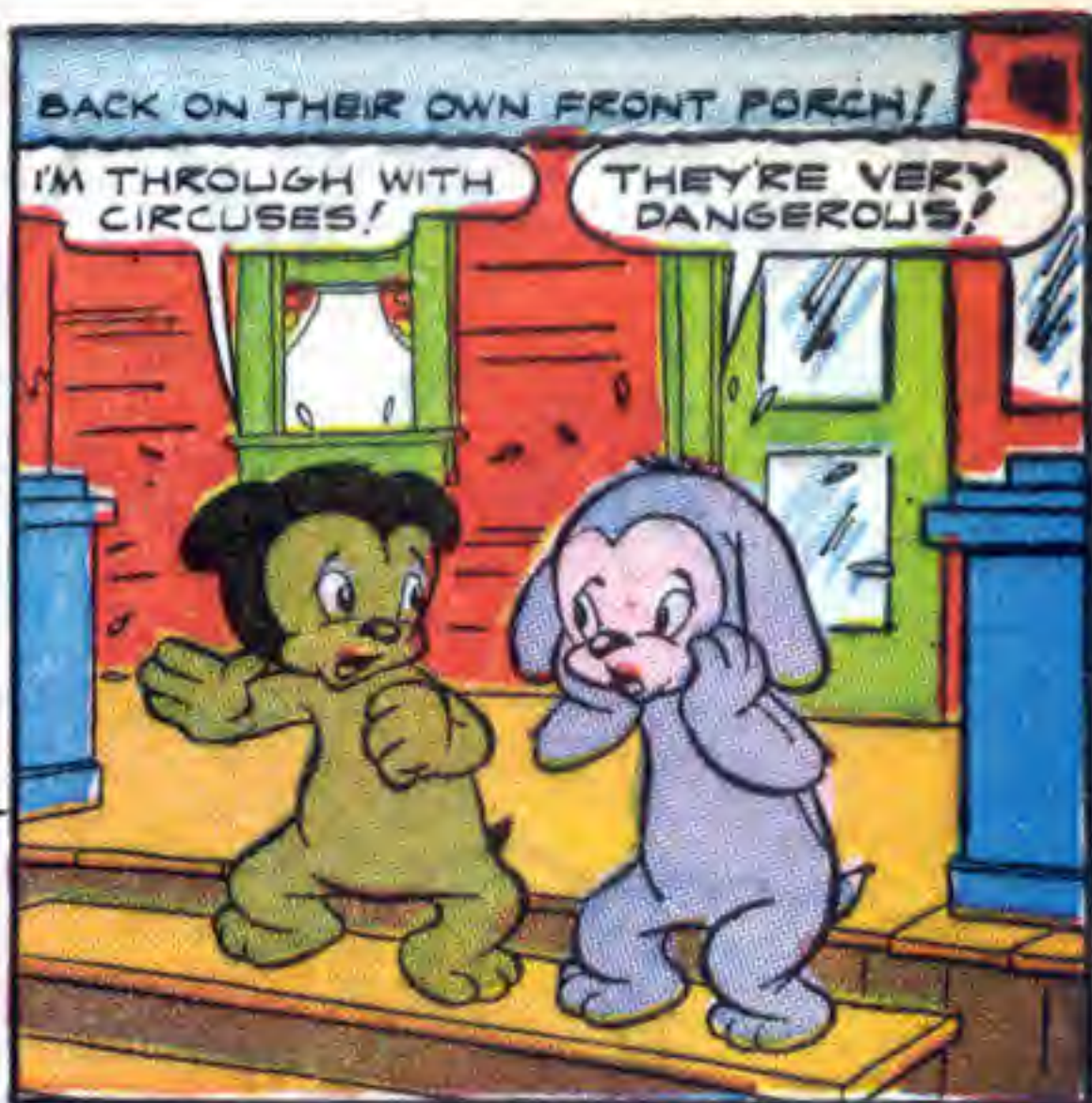
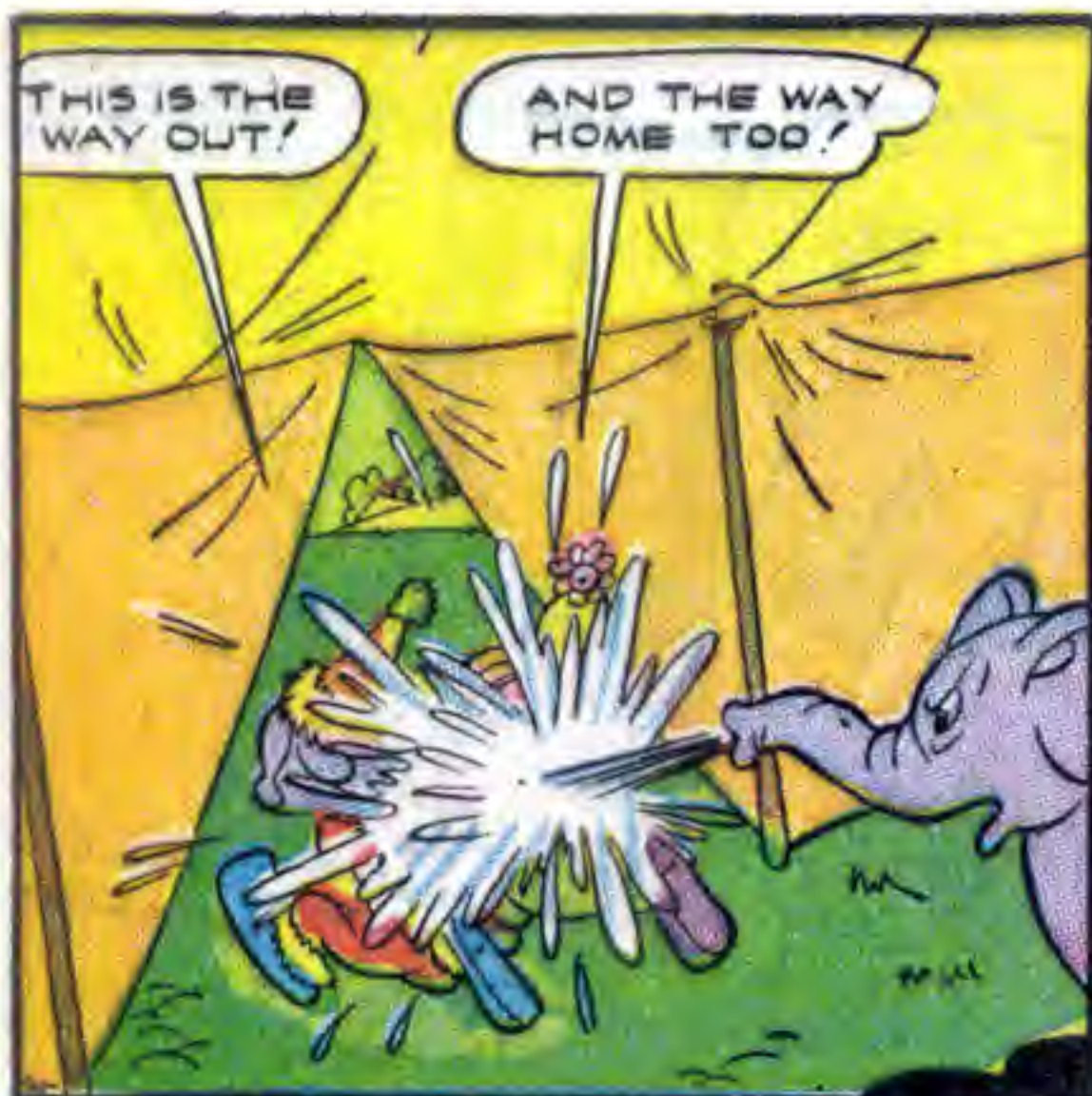
MY! MY! YOU LOOK A LITTLE PALE!



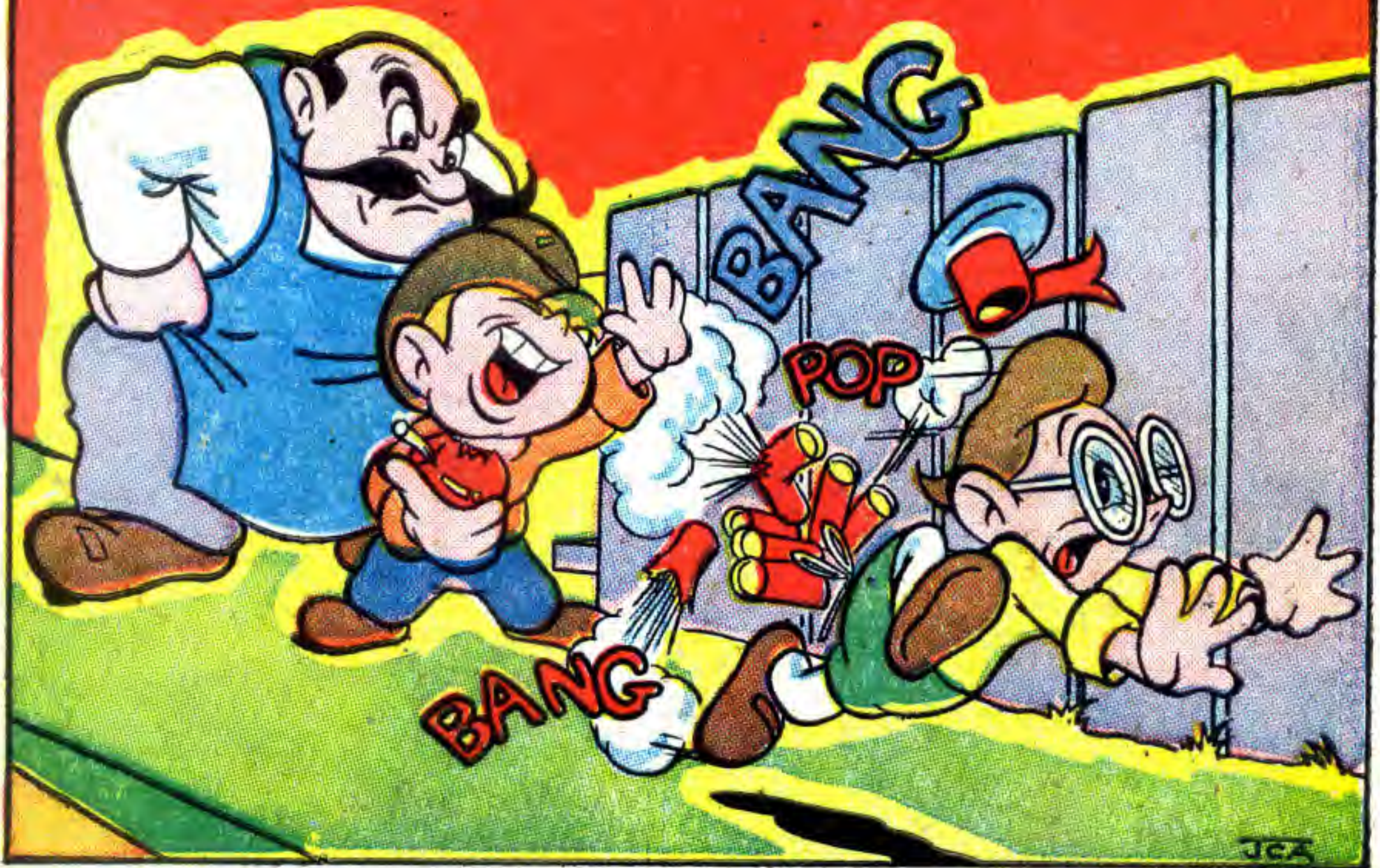








SMARTY



JCA

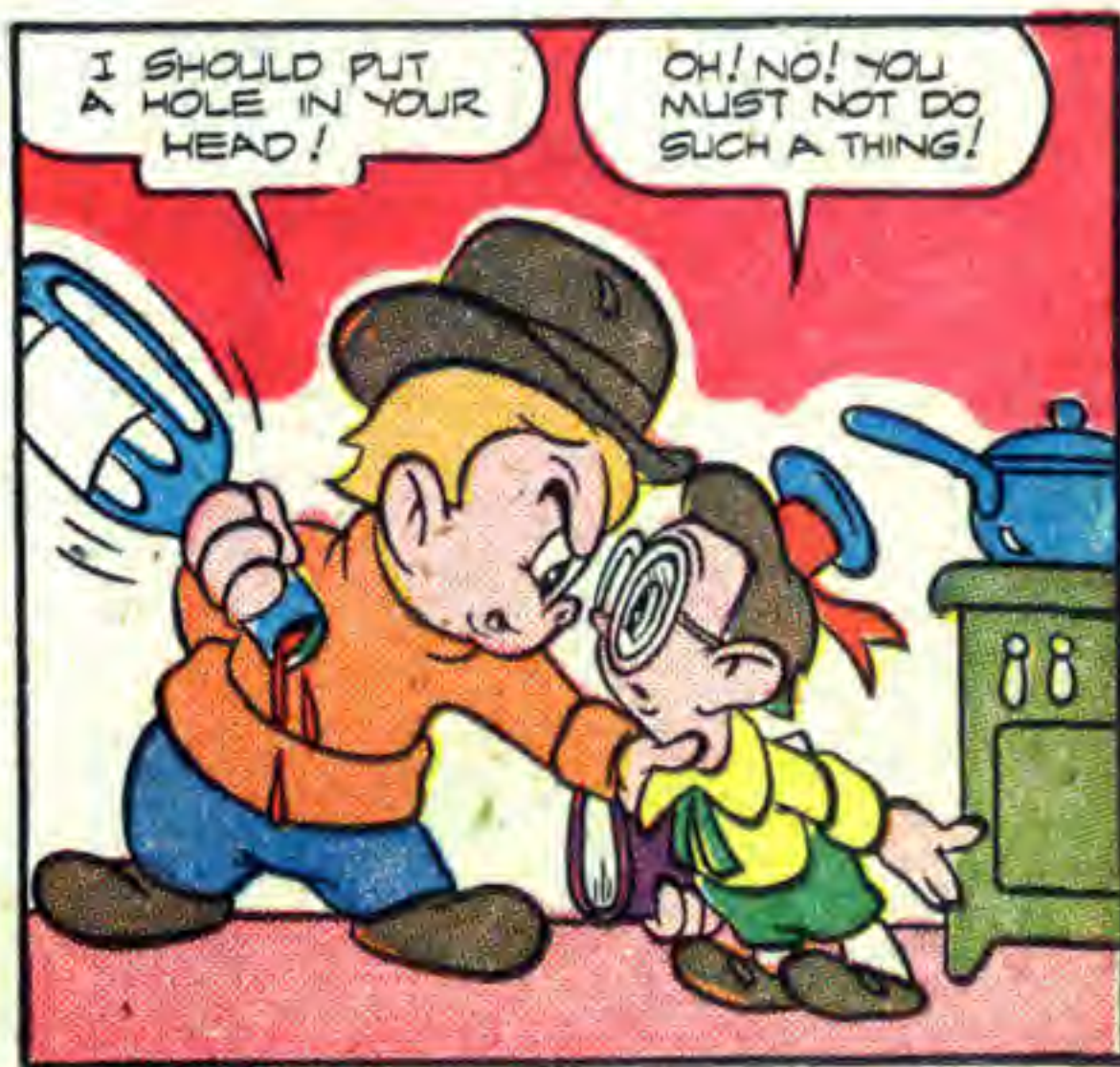
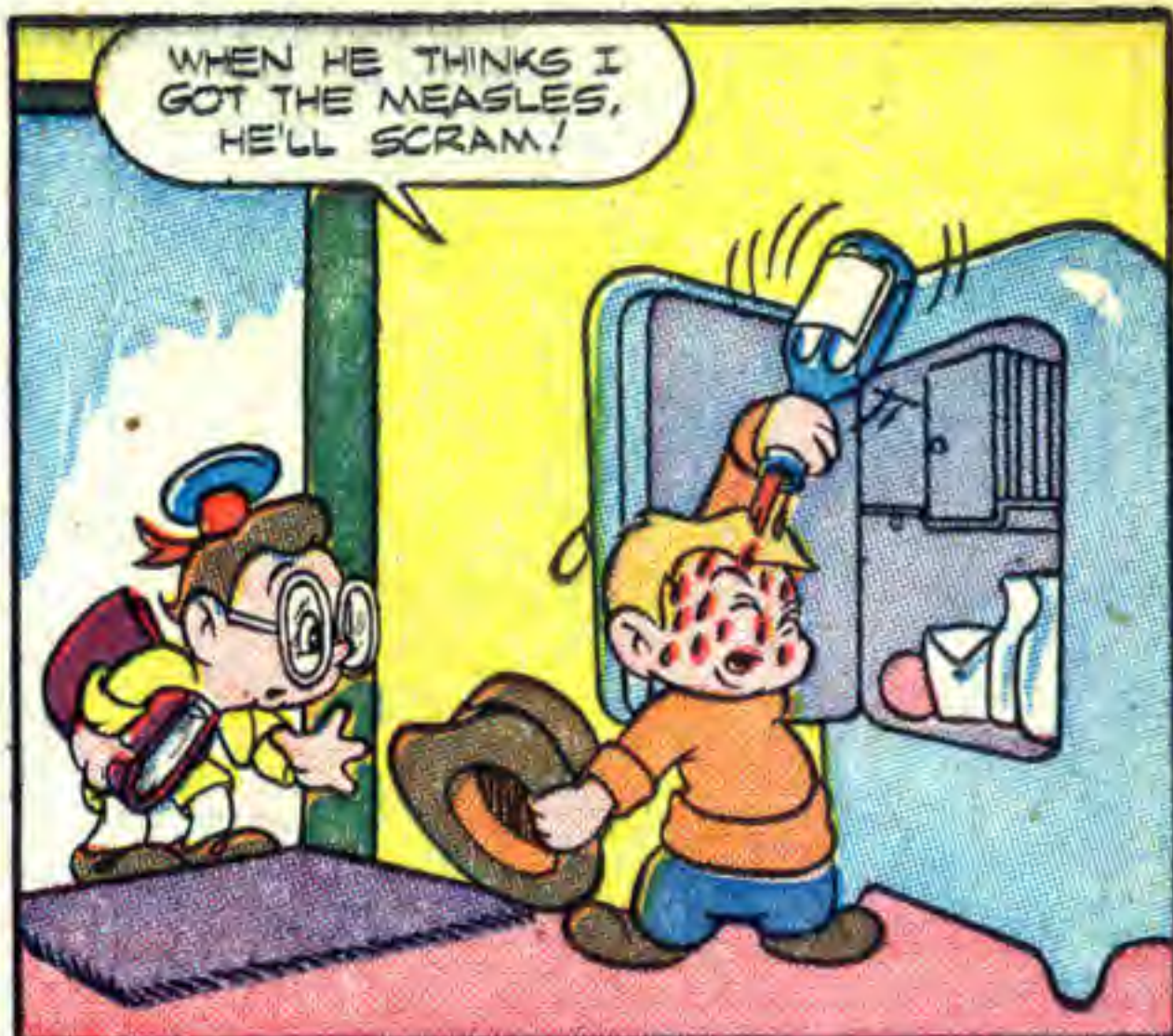
WHY, OF COURSE SMARTY
WILL BE GLAD TO TAKE CARE
OF CLARENCE FOR THE
DAY, MRS. SNOOPWOOPLE!

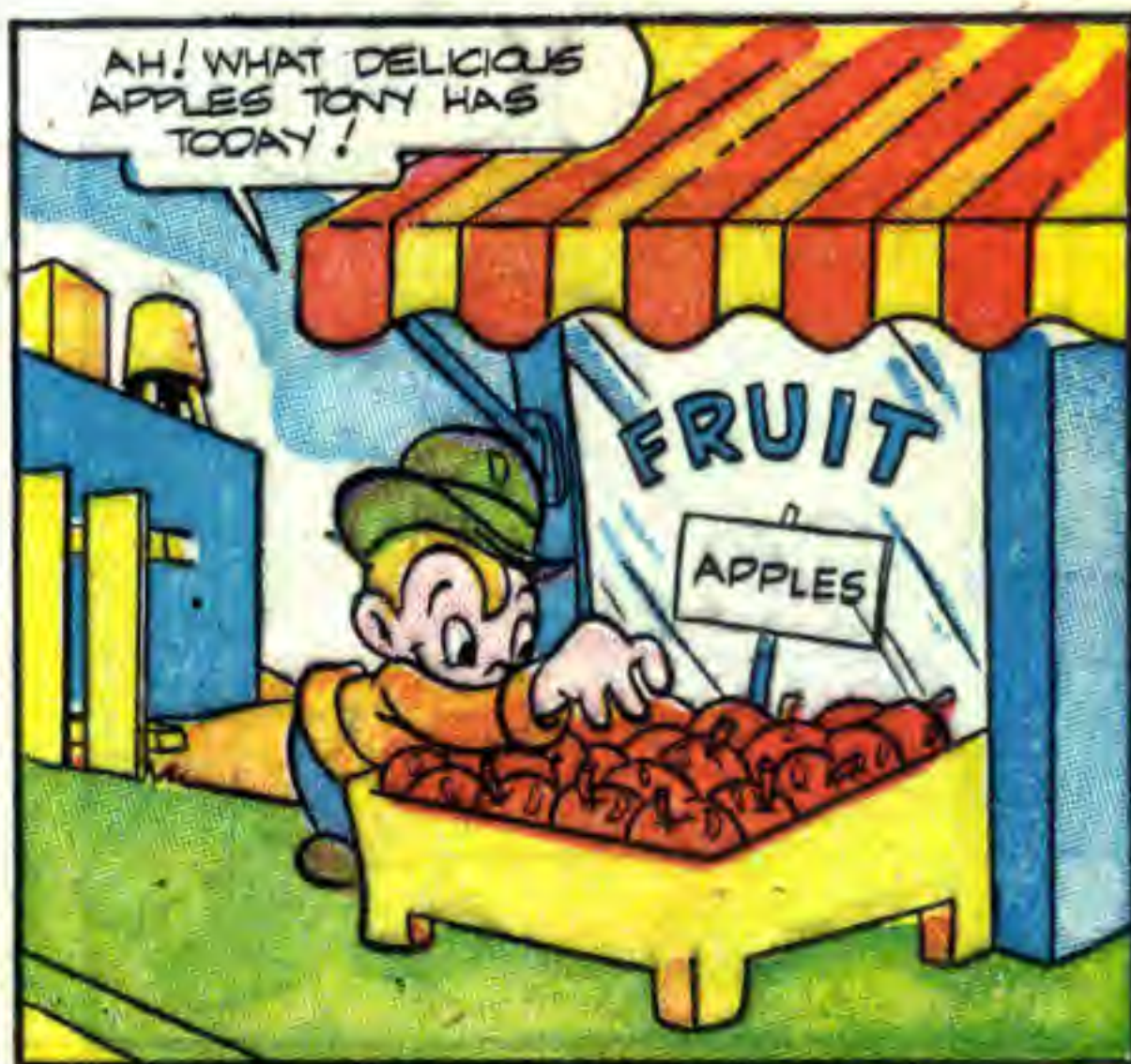
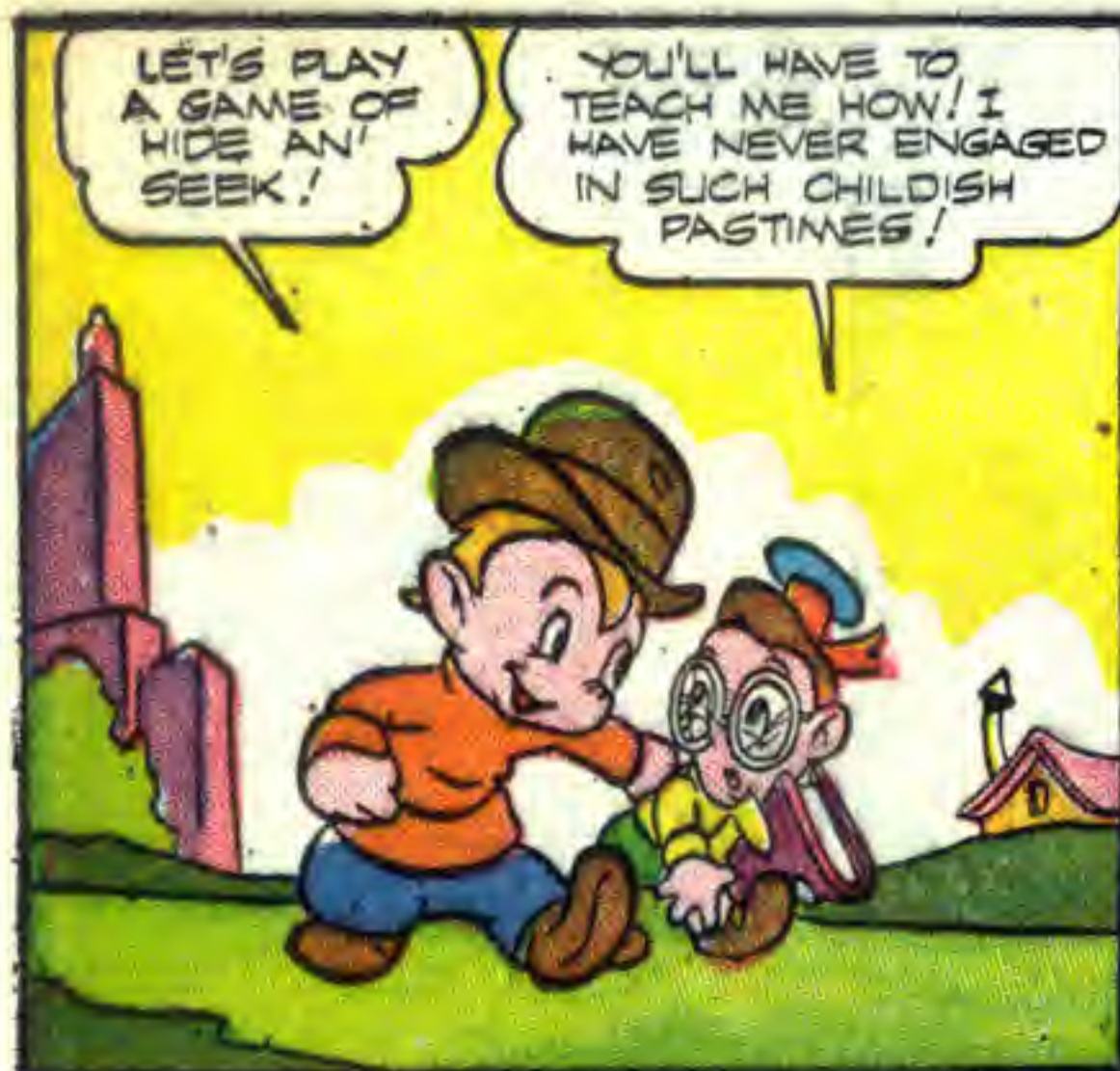


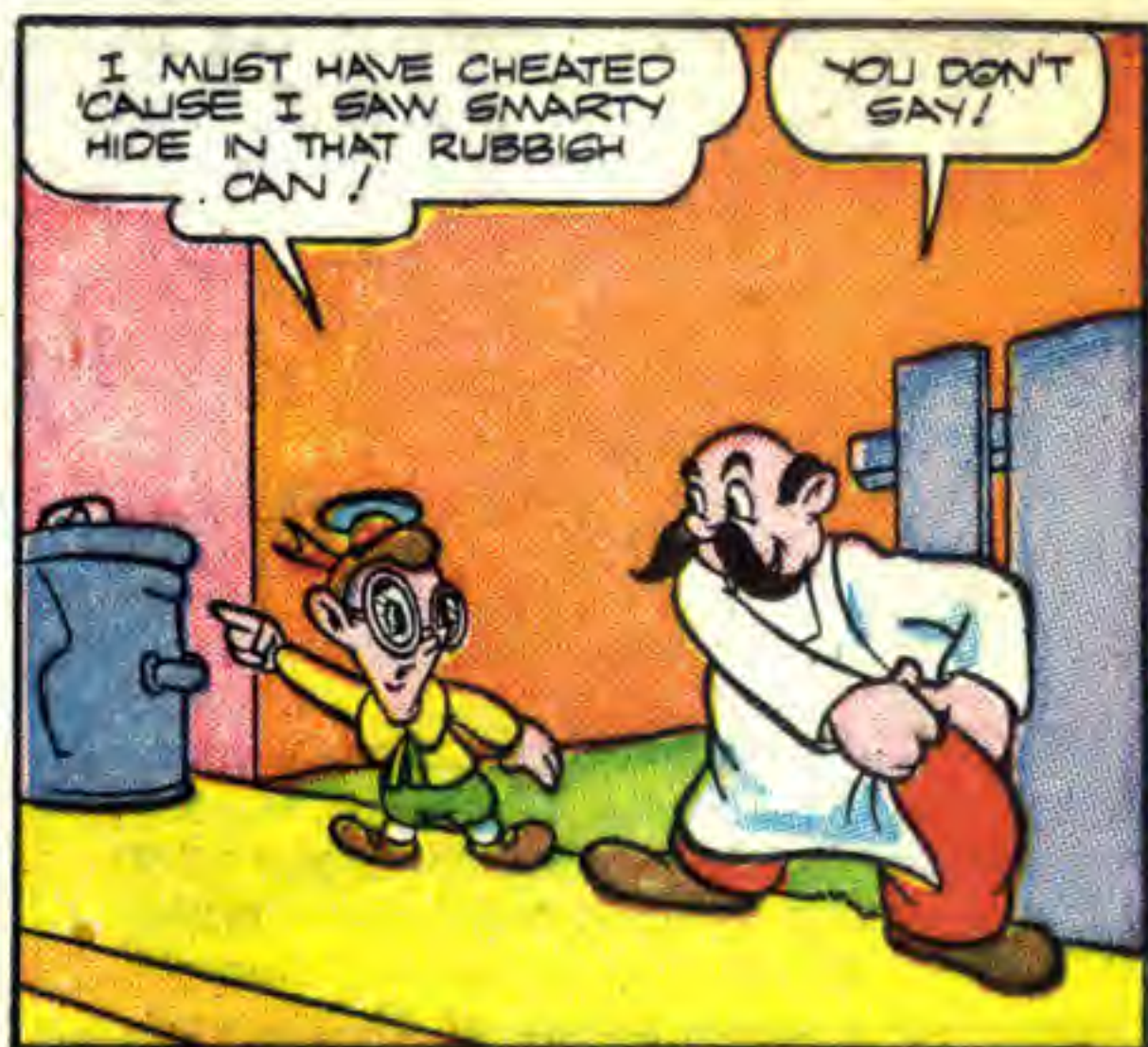
AW, MAW!

NOW, SMARTY, NO
ARGUMENTS! BE-
SIDES, CLARENCE
MAY GIVE YOU A
FEW POINTERS ON
BEING A GOOD
BOY!









THE PICNIC PARTY

by

George Collis

ROLY POLY was wandering along a country road when he ran into Smarty. Smarty immediately wanted to know what his friend was up to and when Roly told him that he was having a picnic all by himself, it took only a quick glance at Roly's well-filled lunch basket for Smarty to decide that he wanted to come along.

Roly, always a little gentleman, agreed and the two proceeded on their way, enjoying the beautiful warm weather and watching the fleecy clouds chase each other across the blue sky. Suddenly, however, they realized that they were not alone.

It was not anything that they could point to actually that first convinced them. Rather it was an uneasy feeling that someone, or something, was trailing their every step. Roly felt it first but didn't say anything about it to Smarty who wasn't very sympathetic to other people's feelings anyway.

The feeling grew stronger and stronger in Roly, however, and soon he found himself glancing nervously over his shoulder at the road through the forest that they were traveling upon. Try as he might, however, he could not see anything. But the feeling that something—perhaps something very dangerous—was following him continued.

Several times when he took a quick glance over his shoulder Roly caught Smarty doing the same thing but neither youngster made any mention of their growing suspicion. At least not until once when both of them looking back at the path, walked right into each other and bumped heads—hard.

As they rubbed their heads and stared at each other it dawned on them that they both had the same idea. Roly was the first to speak.

"Smarty," said the little fat boy, "I've been thinking that our footsteps have been dogged lately by some mysterious creature of an undetermined species."

"Let us not have nothing to do with that subject at this moment, Roly," answered his friend. "Dis is more important. I'm pretty dern sure that somep'n is folleying us. I dunno what it is."

"That is approximately what I had in mind," Roly rejoined. "Now the question is, what steps to correct this unpleasant complicated situation should we embark upon?"

"Let's leave dat for a while too," Smarty snapped. "I think we oughta start doing somep'n about whatever's after us foist."

Roly agreed and the two hit upon a plan. First they speeded up their walk almost to a run. Then, where the path took a sharp turn, instead of continuing on it, they ducked behind a large tree, big enough to hide them and, at the same time, give them a clear view of the path behind.

Sure enough, their strategy worked for, just a couple of minutes after they had hidden themselves, along the road came a huge furry figure, obviously intent on their trail.

"A bear!" they whispered in consternation at the sight of the giant of the forest.

"What will we do?" whispered Roly, for once too frightened to use any of the big words of which he was so fond.

"I don't know," confessed his friend. "He sure is awful big, ain't he?"

The bear was big, too. As he got closer to our little friends, he seemed to get bigger and bigger until he was almost the size of a small house.

Suddenly, Roly felt that his ears were deceiving him or that if they weren't, his friend had suddenly lost his mind. He looked closely at Smarty in sudden worry, and, sure enough, the little tough boy was laughing. Laughing, while a few feet away, a huge bear was getting closer and closer to them.

Meeting his pal's astonished stare, the youngster with the battered derby wiped the tears of merriment from his eyes and explained, or, to be more truthful, demonstrated the reason for his mirth.

For, with no explanation for his sudden courage, Smarty suddenly stepped out into the bear's path and, almost face to face with the giant, let out a huge "Boo . . ." almost into the startled creature's ear.

The results were immediate. The bear, uttering plaintive cries of fright, ran headlong

into one tree, bounced off and tore blindly with terrific force, directly into another. The force of this second blow apparently was too much for him and uttering a moan, he sank, unconscious, to the ground.

Smarty doubled up with laughter, laughter that increased when he saw the look of hopeless amazement on Roly's face as the latter crept cautiously from behind the tree.

His friend's amazement soon brought Smarty to his senses and he hastened to explain.

"Shucks," he said disdainfully, "I guess we wuz too hasty. This ain't no real bear."

"N-n-not a real bear?" asked Roly as he stole another glance at the huge brown figure, now stirring back to life. "It sure looks like a real bear," he added, taking a couple of cautious steps away from the figure.

"Naw," said Smarty contemptuously, "Ya never met him? He's Booby Bear—just a big kind hearted dope. Wouldn't hurt a flea if he wuz smart enough to ever catch a flea."

"Hey, there," he added as the bear's eyes slowly opened. "Wot do ya mean, folleying us like that?"

The bear, Roly noticed, looked sheepishly down at the ground at the question. Obviously from his embarrassment. Smarty was right. This was no creature of prey. This was just a big, cheerful animal, no more fierce than a well-trained sheep dog.

Smarty continued berating and scolding the animal and suddenly Roly was sorry for the bear. He looked so miserable at the words of reproach that the boy with the turtle-necked sweater was using that even Roly, scared as he had been, wished Smarty would stop.

But the scolding continued. Smarty was really lecturing the bear and the bear was very unhappy. Big tears were gathering in his eyes, Roly noticed.

Smarty was almost finished, but not quite. Still talking, he picked up a silly little hat that the bear had been wearing and jammed it down on the giant's head.

"And, besides all that," he continued, "just look at you. What good are you—except for a rug. Big, thick skin, big feet—a strong back and a weak mind."

Sorry for the embarrassed bear, eyes still glued to the ground like a school-boy before an angry teacher half his size, Roly picked up the lunch basket and pulled at Smarty's arm.

"Let him alone now. Let's get going," he said and turned to enter the forest again . . . and stood, stiff with astonishment.

During their adventure with the bear, a startling change had swept over the scene,

unnoticed. A thick pall of heavy grey smoke almost blotted out the path and, behind it, a deep orange glow and a crackling roar told of the advance of a forest fire—most dreaded of the enemies of both animal and man in the woods.

Startled, the boys took in the scene immediately. The fire had almost entirely surrounded them. Escape seemed cut off, except for one narrow corridor and, even as they started hastily to run for that, the underbrush on each side burst into angry flame.

They were cut off. Dazed, they both came to a stop and, white-faced, turned to stare at each other in horror. Then, before they could speak, a muscular, fur-covered arm swept around each of them from behind and they were lifted from their feet.

Later, they couldn't remember much of what happened after that. All they knew at the time was that Booby, with a boy under each arm, was running at incredible speed up the narrow alley, hemmed in on each side by flaming underbrush.

They remembered later, too, that those huge furry arms protected them from the reaching fingers of the fire, that those huge feet churned up the smoking path at a speed they could never have matched and that strong back and shoulders held them safely till the danger was past.

The flaming woods safely behind them, the boys rested on a grassy knoll, getting their wind back and thinking hard. When they were rested, they looked at each other questioningly and apparently found the answer they sought in each other's face.

Resolutely, they turned to the bear, apologies forming on their lips. Then their mouths dropped open. Their rescuer was gone! It was a few minutes before the reason dawned on Smarty, who knew the giant best.

"Why—the big dope. Do you know why he ran off so fast, Roly?" asked Smarty, with a chuckle. Then, seeing by his friend's face that he definitely didn't know why, the youngster with the derby pointed to the ground. Looking that way, Roly saw only their empty lunch basket.

"Don't ya get it?" Smarty grinned. "The big dope couldn't do anything right—all the way through. He took a chance on his own life to save ours—then stole our lunch and ran away! He's probably hidin' somewheres right now, very much ashamed of himself . . ."

Roly laughed too. Then, as they turned for home, he remarked, a remark that had been made before about Booby.

"Well," he said, "he may be a dope and may do things wrong a lot—but he sure is a nice guy to have around when you need a friend. . . ."

BAD BADGER



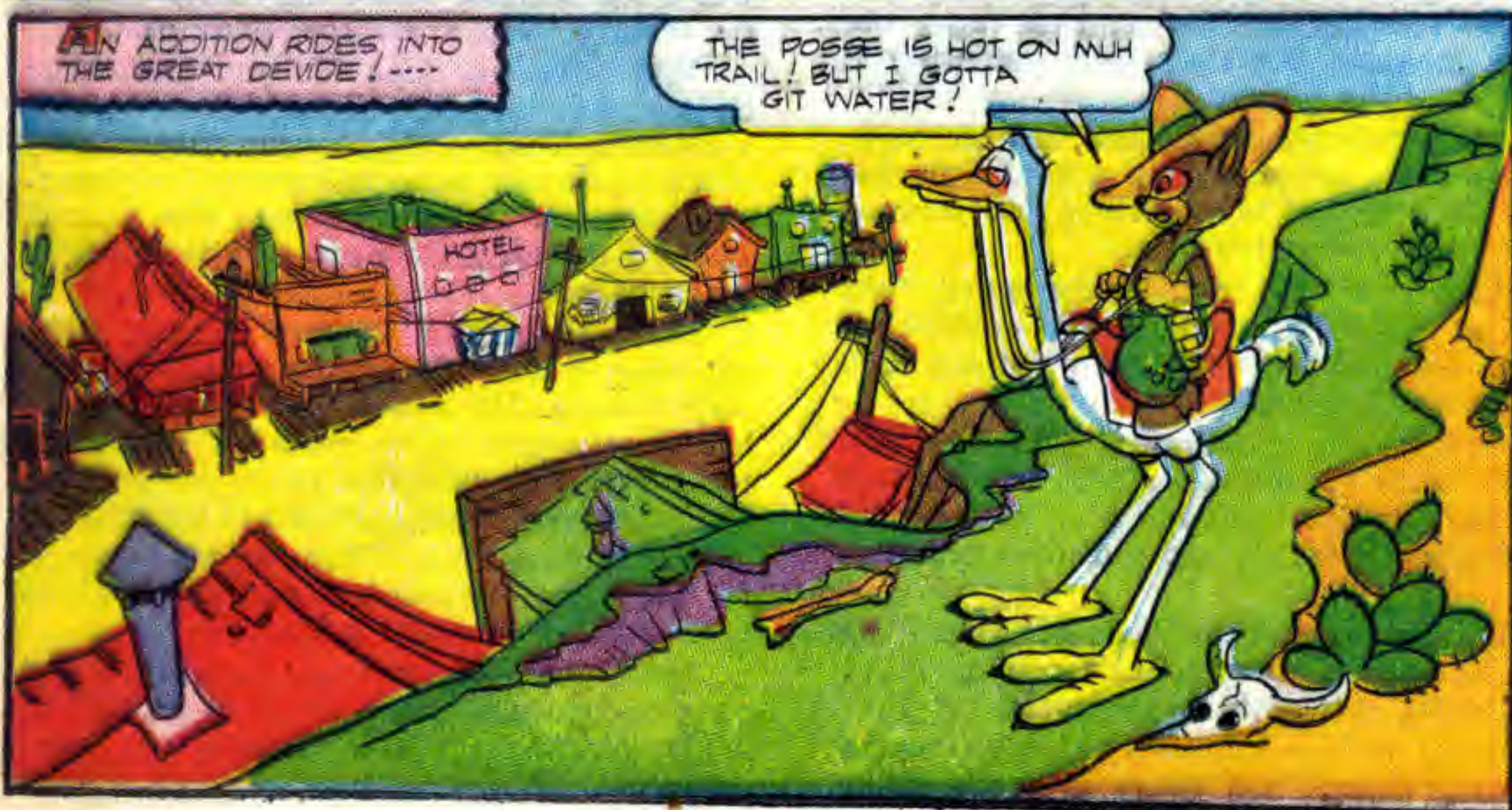
BANG

TAKE THET, HOMBRE!
THET'S WHUT BAD BADGER
THINKS OF YUH!



AN ADDITION RIDES INTO
THE GREAT DEVIDE!

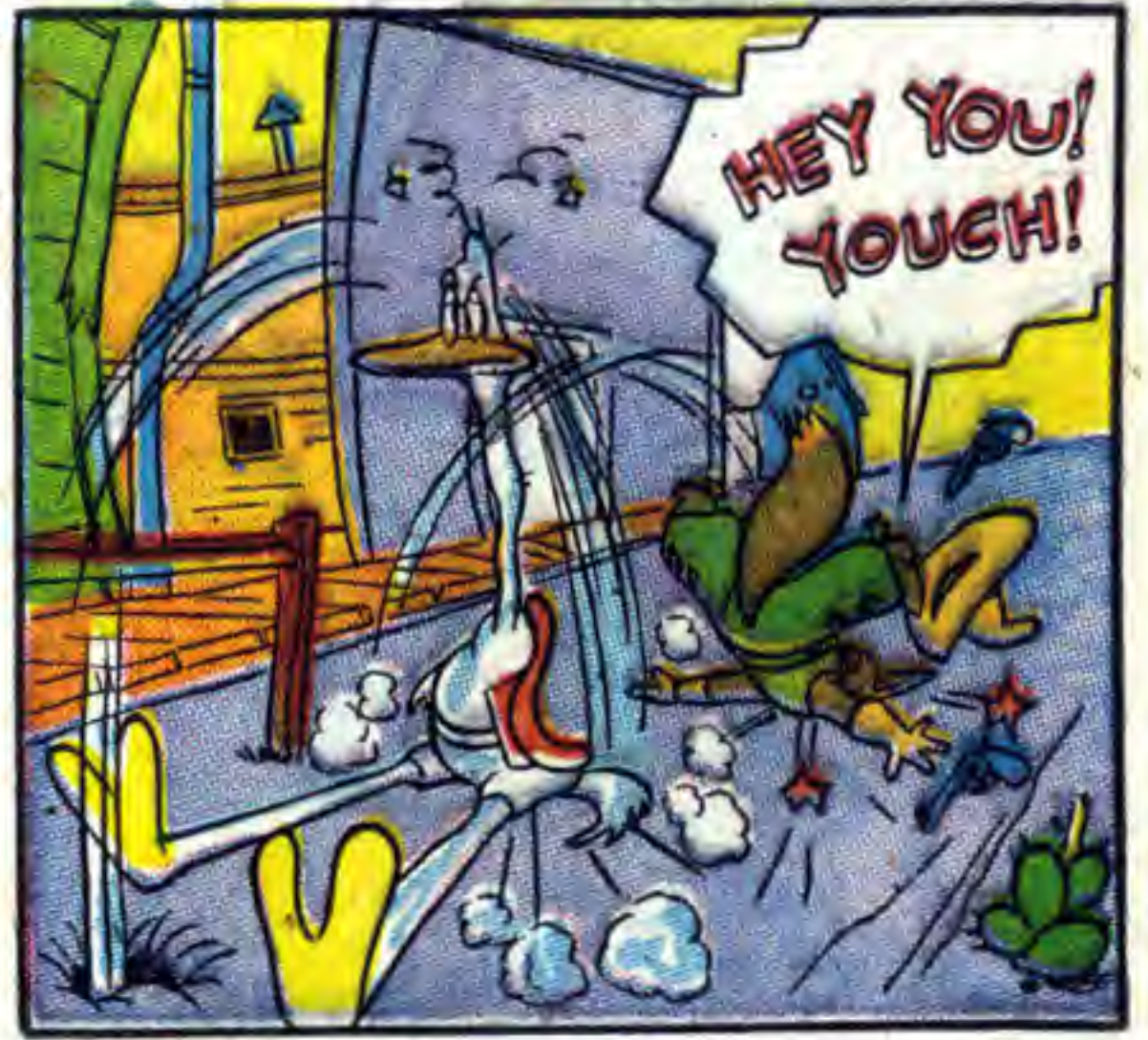
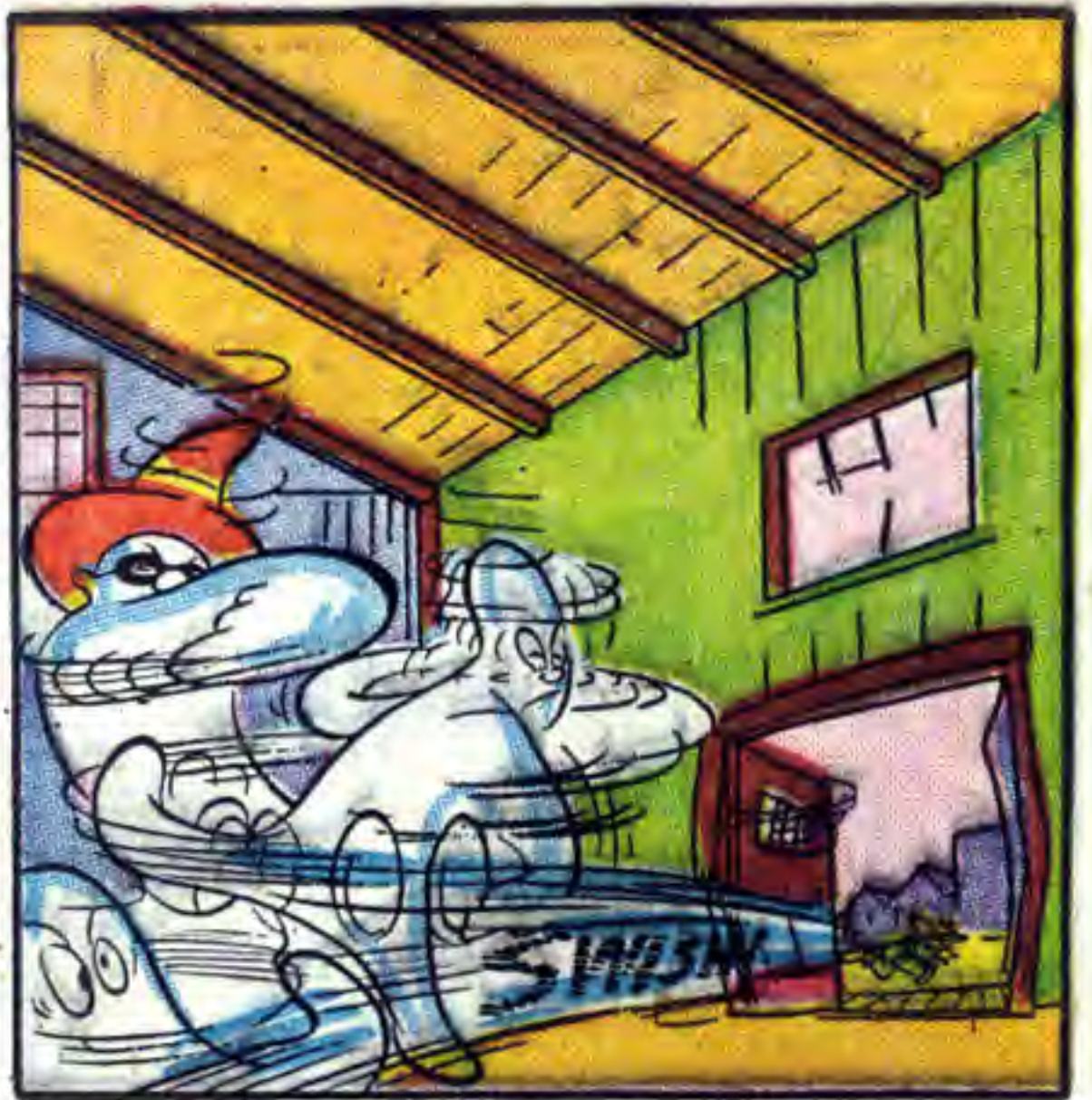
THE POSSE IS HOT ON MUH
TRAIL! BUT I GOTTA
GIT WATER!

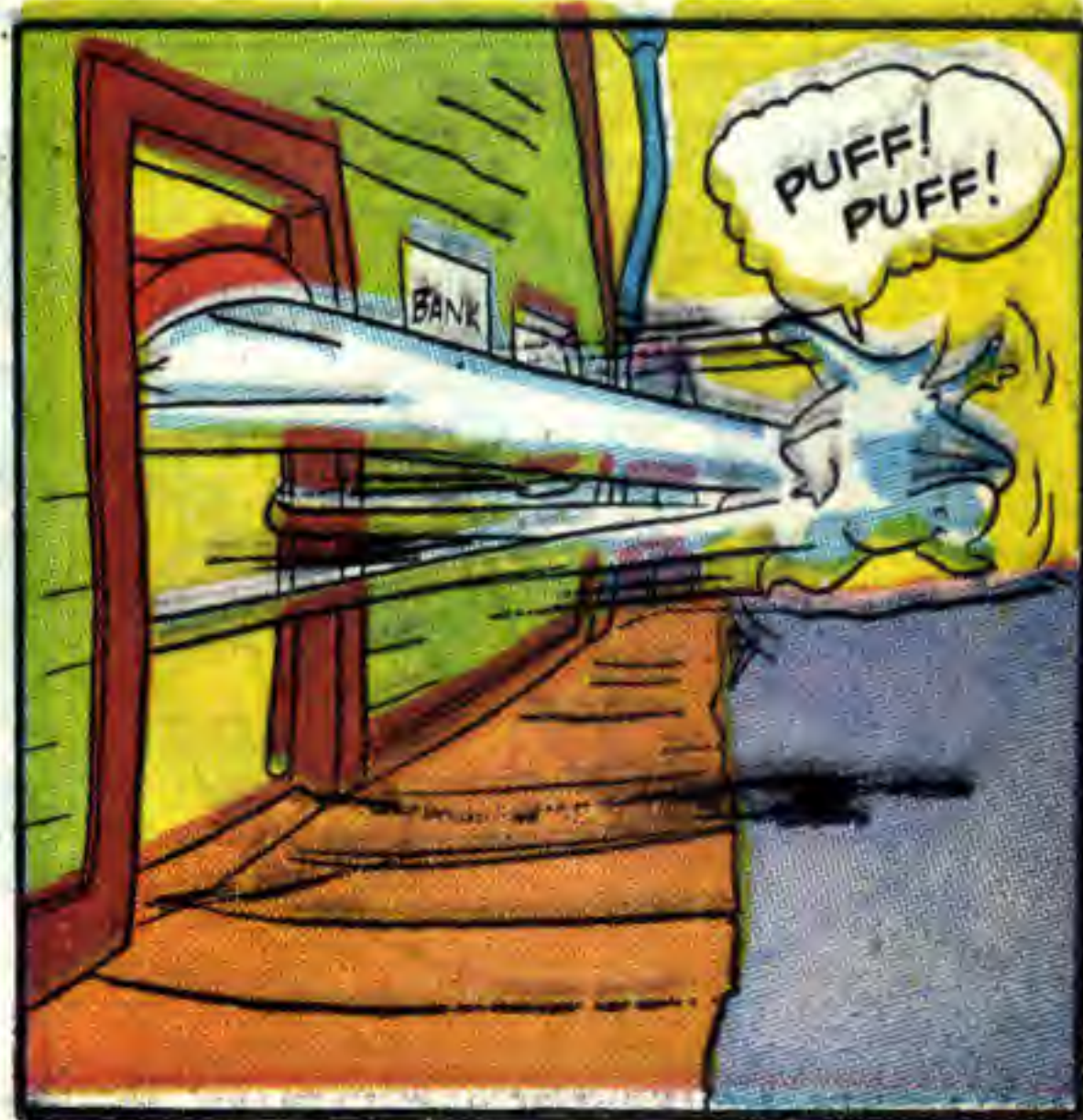


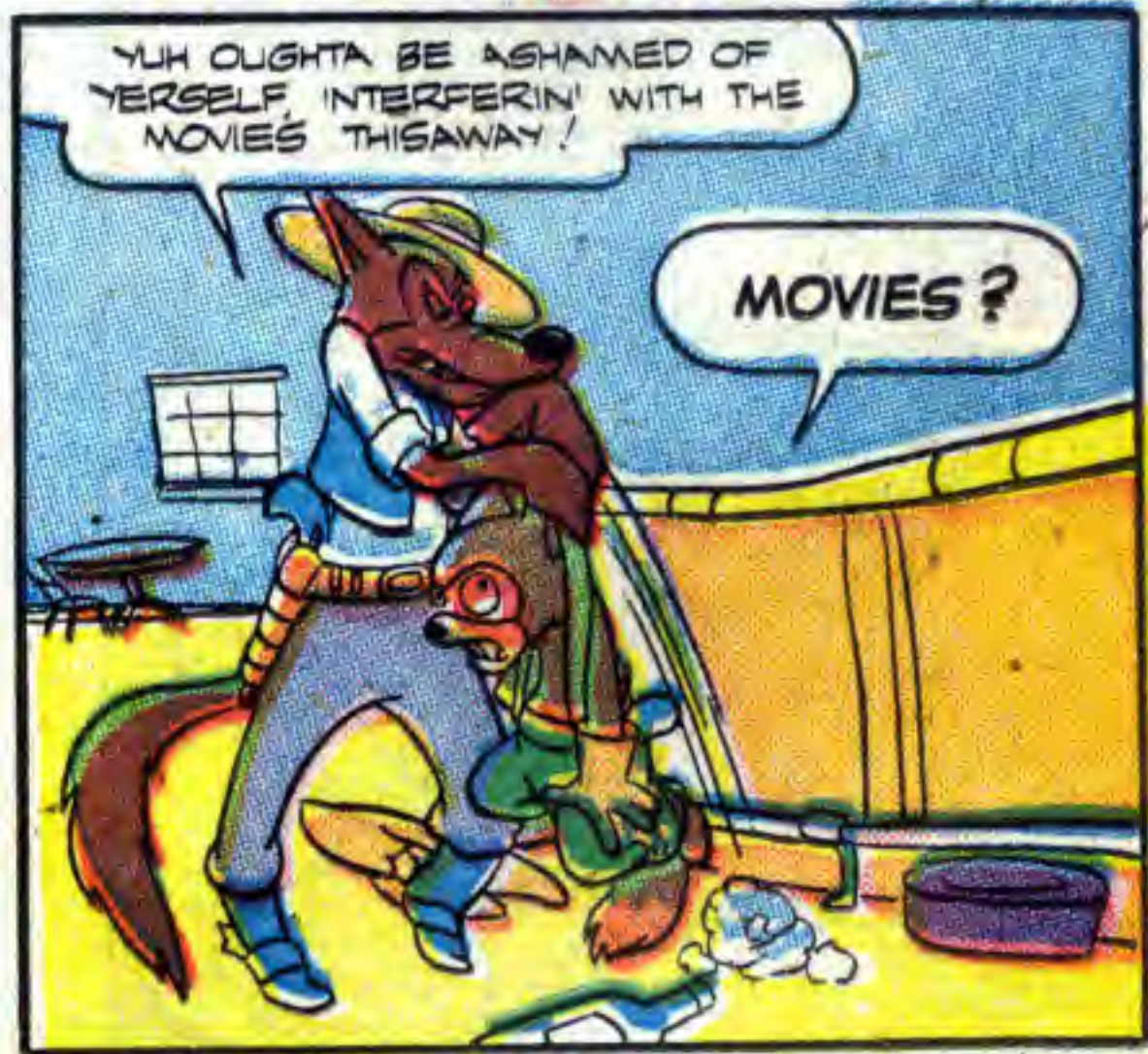






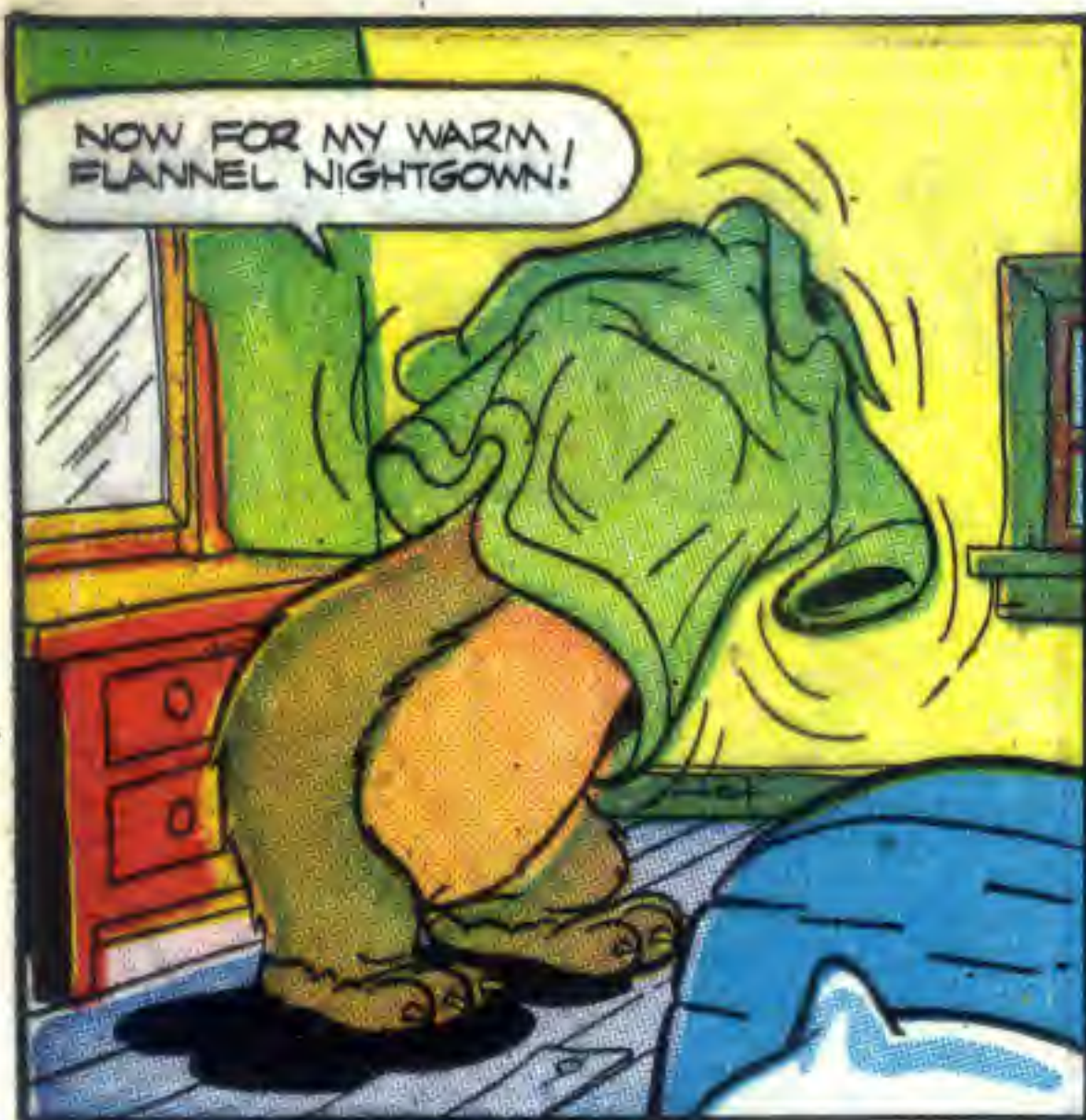


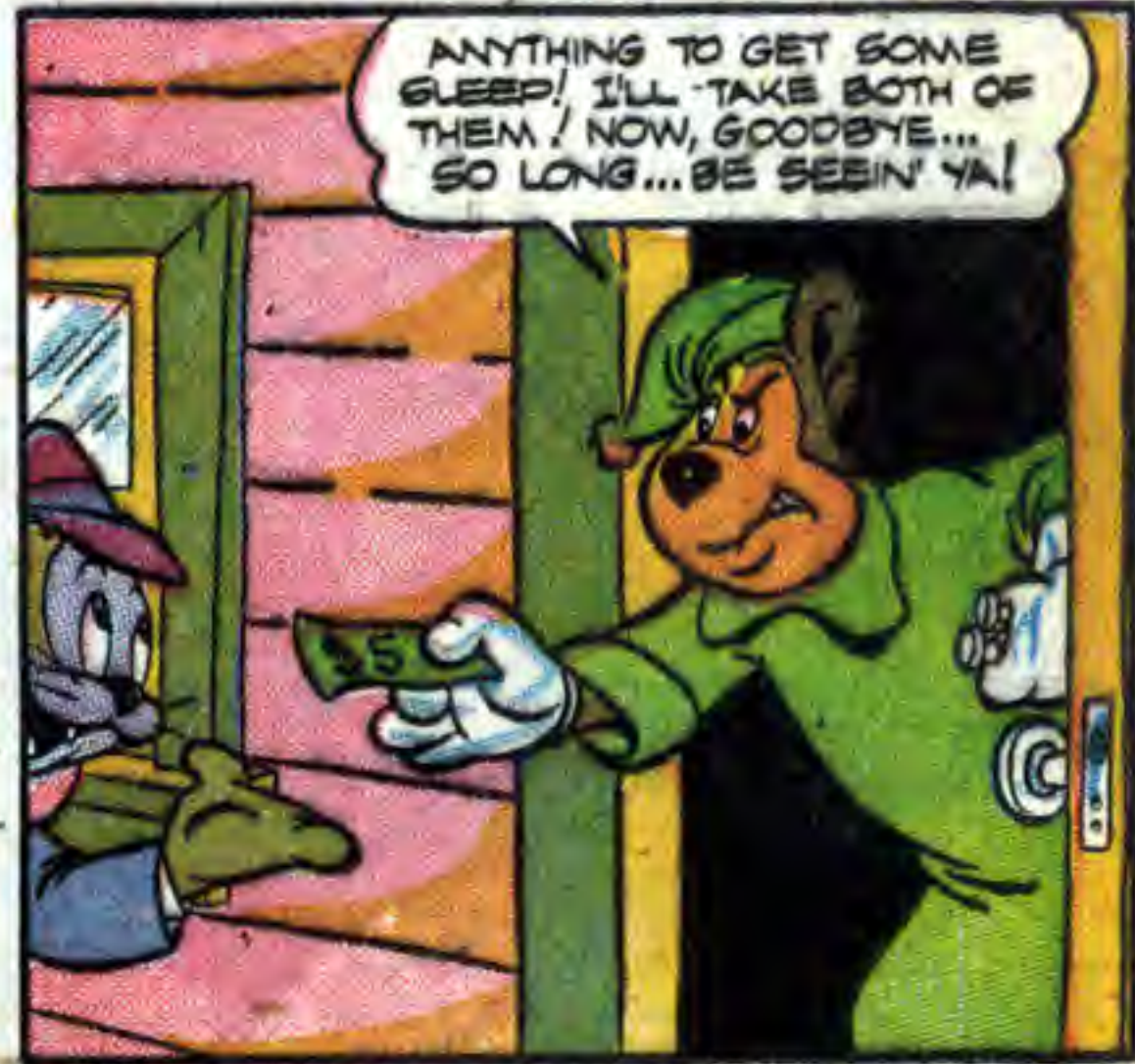




BOOBY BEAR



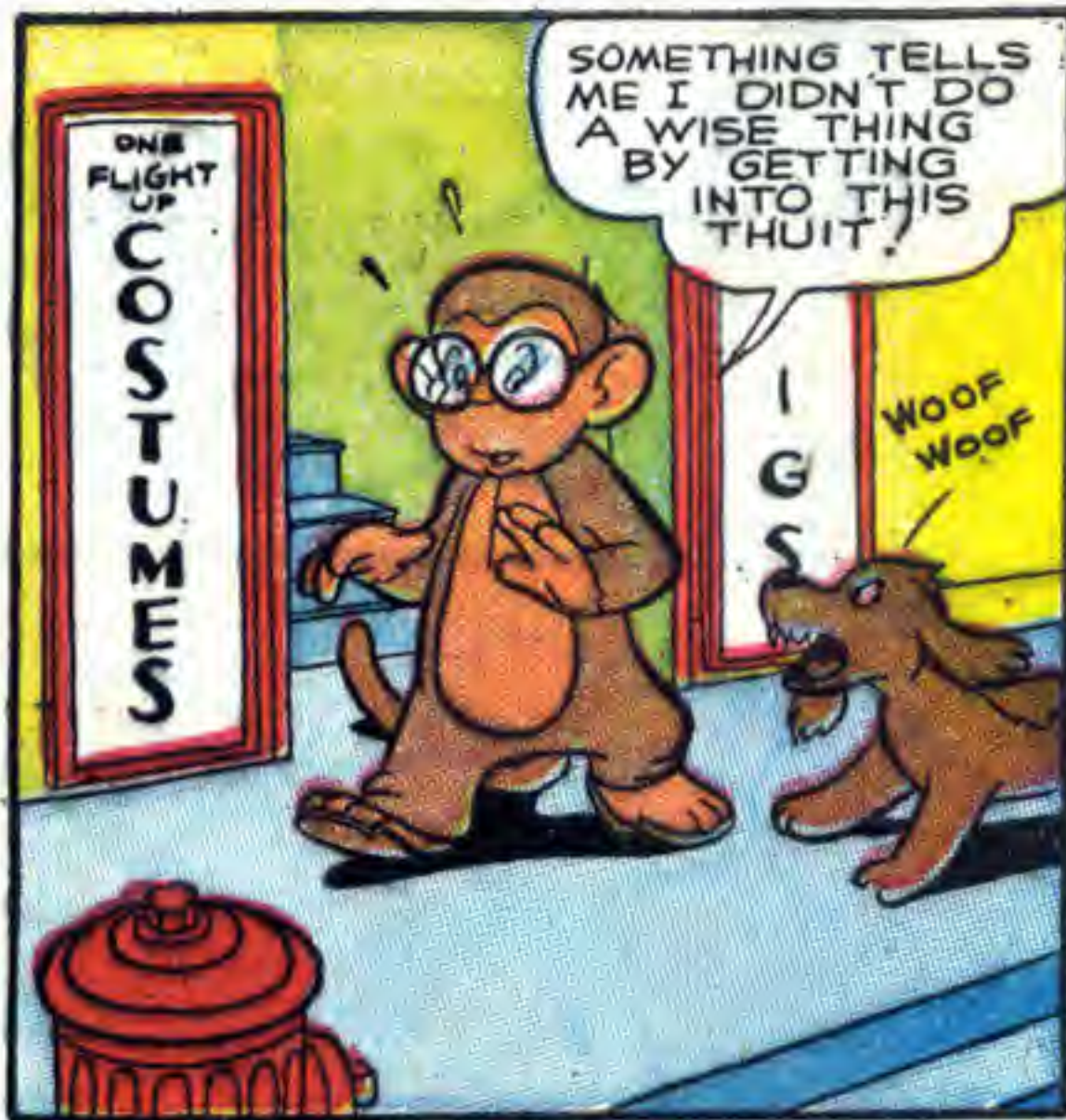






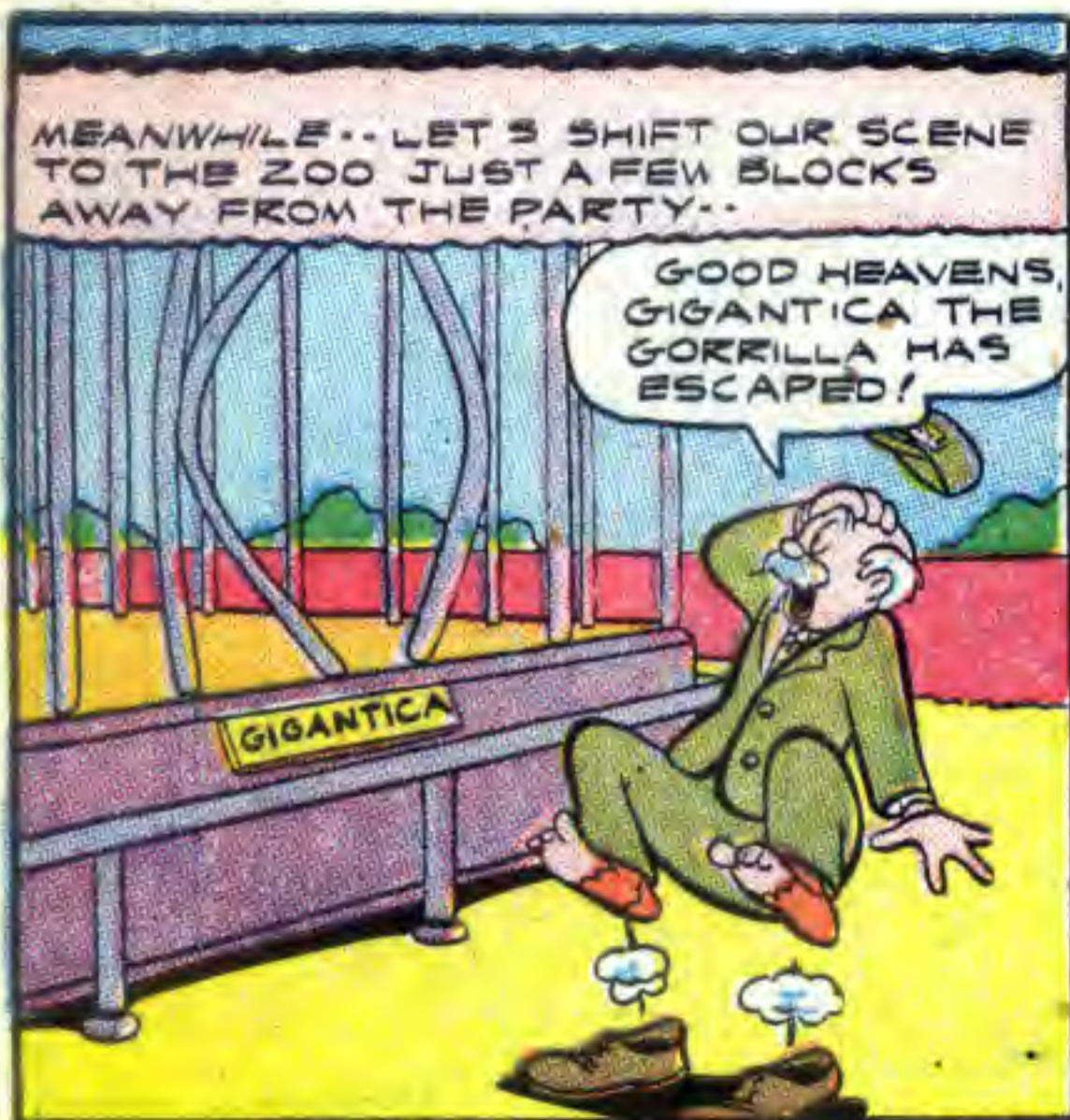
Roly Poly



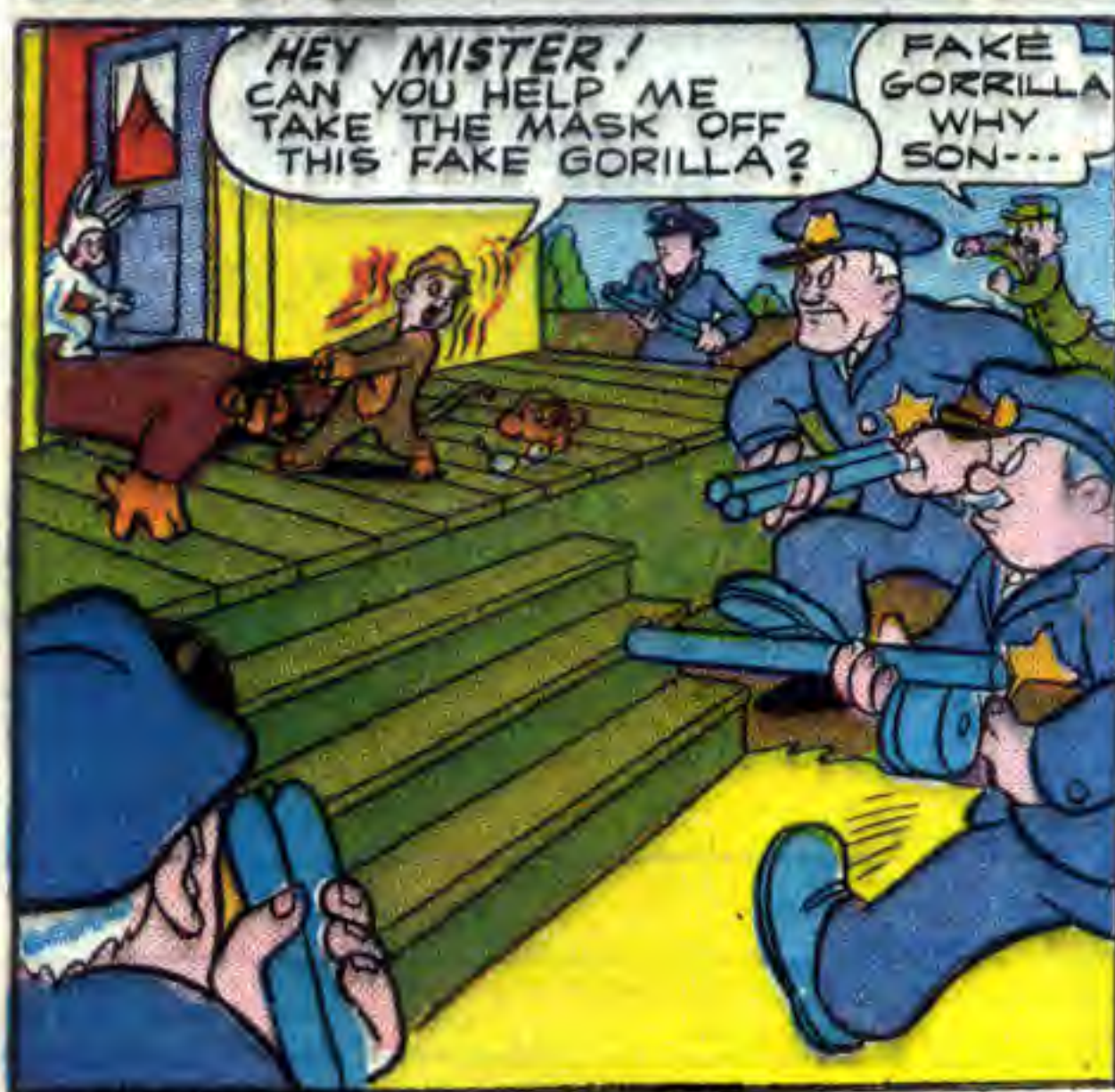
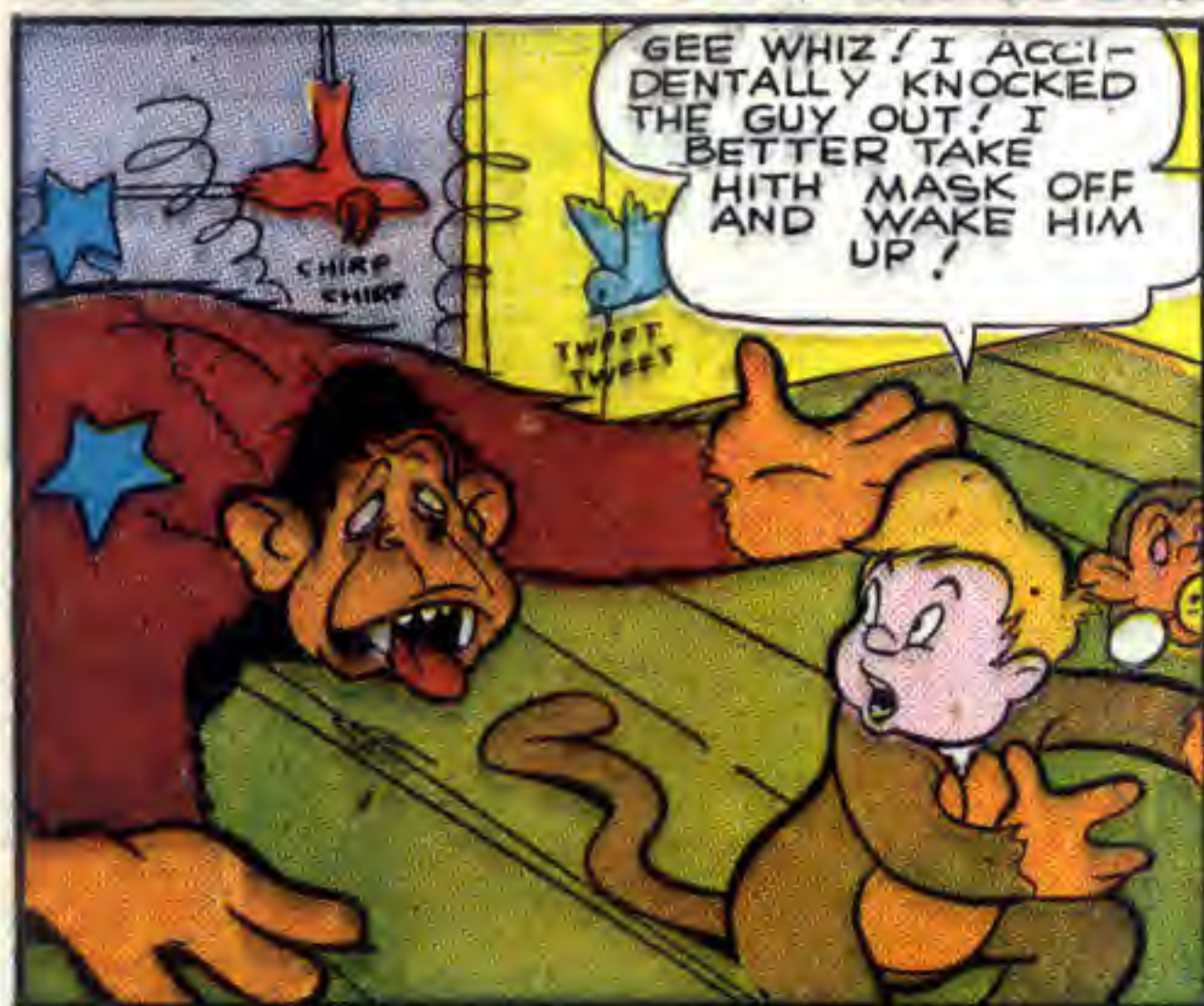














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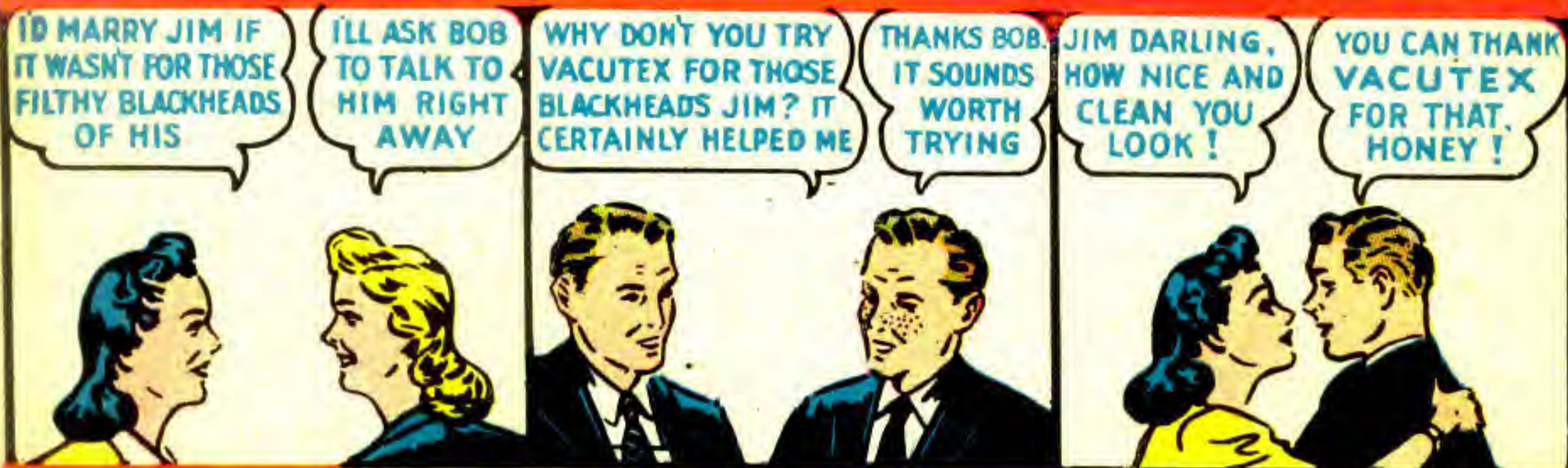
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